

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

**Hybrid Meeting - North Yorkshire Council, County Hall, Racecourse Lane, Northallerton,
North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD**

5 DECEMBER 2024 - 10:30 Start

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declaration of Personal or Prejudicial Interests – Members to declare any interests in items on the Agenda and the nature of such interests
3. Short Presentation on Work of the Shore Operations Team – Dean Grason

Items for decision

4. To take the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 June 2024 as a correct record, consider any matters arising and authorise the Chairman to sign (*pages 1-8*)
5. To take the Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings held on 3 September 2024 (*pages 9-12*)
6. Budget monitoring 2024/2025 (*pages 13-16*)
7. Levy 2025/2026 (*pages 17-22*)

Items for discussion

8. NEIFCA Byelaws Update – (*pages 23-26*)
9. Chief Officer's Operational Report (*pages 27-38*)
10. Science Advisory Group update (*pages 39-40*)
11. Fisheries Statutes and Regulations – Prosecutions (*pages 41-42*)

Items for information

12. NEIFCA Annual Report 2023-2024 (*pages 43-77*)
13. Reports from partner Agencies and bodies
 - 13(a) Marine Management Organisation
 - 13(b) Environment Agency
 - 13(c) Natural England
14. Any other items, which the Chairman decides, are urgent by reason of special circumstances which must be specified.

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**AUTHORITY MEETING****06 JUNE 2024****Present:**

Dr Stephen Axford
 Councillor David Chance
 Prof Michael Elliott
 Mr Michael Montgomerie
 Mr Graham Collins
 Mr Andrew Faichney
 Mr Kevin Woodcock
 Councillor Cerri Cawley
 Councillor Tim Norman
 Councillor Johnathan Owen
 Miss Rachel Hanbury
 Mr Christian Proud
 Miss Claire Argent
 Councillor Neil Swannick

Representing:

MMO appointee
 North Yorkshire County Council
 Chairman
 MMO appointee
 MMO appointee
 MMO appointee
 MMO appointee
 Redcar & Cleveland Council
 East Riding of Yorkshire Council
 East Riding of Yorkshire Council
 MMO appointee
 MMO Representative
 Natural England Representative
 North Yorkshire County Council

Mr Darren Stevens, Clerk, Mr David McCandless, Chief Officer, Mr Stephen Chandler, Treasurer, Dr Ralf Bublitz, Senior Environmental & Scientific Officer, Emma Jones, NEIFCA Support Services Officer attended the meeting.

The Committee met at The County Hall, Beverley, members were also able to attend the meeting via Teams. The meeting started at 09:30am

1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
	Apologies of absence were received from MMO members Rebecca Lynam, Will Jenkinson, Terry Pearson and Andrew Wheeler, Councillor Members Creevy and Poole.
2.	DECLARATION OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS
	Resolved –The Clerk asked Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in items on the Agenda and the nature of such interests. Councillor David Chance, North Yorkshire County Council and Councillor Cerri Cawley, Redcar & Cleveland Council declared that they are both members of the crustacea die of committee.
3.	GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTIONS TO NEW MEMBERS AND APPOINTEES
	The Clerk reported that the following new Members had been appointed to the Authority: Cllr Tracey Henry – Hull City Council Cllr Lynda Scanlan – Sunderland City Council

	Cllr Tim Norman – East Riding of Yorkshire Council Cllr Jonathan Owen – East Riding of Yorkshire Council
4.	TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN
	The Authority had received one nomination in writing Prof Michael Elliott. The Clerk asked the Authority if there were any other nominations. There were no further nominations. Prof Michael Elliott was duly elected Chairman by a majority vote.
	Resolved - That Prof Michael Elliott, MMO appointee be elected as Chairman for the ensuing year.
5.	TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN
	The Clerk reported that the authority had received one nominations in writing from Councillor David Chance, North Yorkshire County Council. There were no further nominations. Councillor David Chance was duly elected as Vice Chairman.
	Resolved - That Councillor David Chance be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuring year.
6.	TO APPOINT AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
	Resolved – That the Chairman, Vice-Chairman Councillors Creevy, Swannick and Norman Mr Graham Collins, Mr Andrew Wheeler, Miss Rachel Hanbury be appointed for the ensuing year.
7.	TO CONFIRM MEMBERSHIP OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE
	Resolved - That Councillors Owen, Chance and Clerk be appointed for the ensuing year.
8.	TO CONFIRM MEMBSHIP OF THE SCIENCE ADVISORY GROUP
	Resolved – That Chair, Vice-Chairman Dr Stephen Axford, Miss Rebecca Lynam, Mr Graham Collins, Dr Clare Fitzsimmons, Prof Mike Elliott, Mr Michael Montgomerie, Mr Andrew Faichney, Mr Andrew Wheeler and representatives from the Marine Management Organisation, Natural England and the Environment Agency be appointed for the ensuing year.
9.	TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE AND REPORT QUARTERLY
	Resolved - (a) That the following be appointed for the ensuing year to serve and report quarterly on :- Flamborough Harbour Commissioners (2 representatives):

	<p>Councillor Tim Norman Miss Rachel Hanbury</p> <p>Staithes Harbour Board (4 representatives) Councillor Neil Swannick Councillor C Cawley Mr Steven Mallinson NEIFCA Shore Operations Manager Miss Rachel Hanbury</p> <p>(b) That the following be appointed for the ensuing year to attend meetings of:</p> <p>The Association of Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authorities Forum (3 representatives):</p> <p>Chairman/(the Vice-Chairman to substitute when the Chairman is unable to attend) Clerk or Deputy Clerk Chief IFC Officer</p> <p>(c) That it be noted that the Chief IFC Officer was a Director of The Association of Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authorities .</p>
10.	MINUTES OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 08 DECEMBER 2023
	Resolved – That the minutes of the Quarterly meeting held on 08 December 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
11.	MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 07 MARCH 2024
	Resolved – That the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 07 March 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
12.	MARINE AND COASTAL ACCESS ACT 2009 (SECTION 155) – MAKING OF XXXIII BEAM TRAWL BYELAW 2024
	<p>The Chief Officer presented a report to inform Members of the intention to make the following byelaw regulation in accordance with the duty imposed by section 153 and the provisions contained within sections 155, 156, 158 and 160 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 - XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024. Given the unforeseen emergence of the fishery, alongside the potential for impacting stocks, members supported the immediate introduction of an emergency byelaw regulation with the incorporation of a dispensatory process to support further investigation into the fishery in collaboration with the affected industry. The emergency byelaw regulation came into force on 18 July 2023 for an initial period of one year and officers commenced the process of supporting further investigations into the fishery alongside the development of a new byelaw regulation to strengthen the management of the activity in the longer term. The key aims of the new byelaw were to replace the current emergency regulation with flexible management framework that would support the effective management of the king scallop stock from targeted beam trawling activity alongside any associated impacts on the wider environment in the medium to longer</p>

	team. The Chief Officer reiterated to members although further data and information on the emerging fishery is still required, one of the key aims and objectives of the new byelaw is to ensure a mechanism is in place to manage effort and fishing activity in the Authority's district.
	Resolved – a) That the Authority approves the making of the byelaw. b) That the Authority instructs the Clerk to give requisite notice by advertisement of the intention to apply to the Secretary of State for confirmation of the said byelaw.
13.	NEIFCA FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2023/2024
	The Treasurer of the Authority presented a report of the Annual Accounts for NEIFCA for the year ended 31 March 2024. The net expenditure for 2023/24 of £1,039,117 was detailed in the report. The revenue outturn underspend was £295,443 offset by a £11,498 reduction in funding transferred from reserves due to minor underspends on the supplementary budgets for the Fisheries Management Plan and Patrol Vessel Replacement Projects and was summarised in the report. The outturn position was made up of a number of compensating variances. The outturn included £150,000 additional 'grant in aid' income from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra). During the 2022/2023 financial year NEIFCA received notification that £100,000 of additional 'grant in aid' would be provided by Defra with £50,000 allocated to support Marine Protected Area and delivery towards 'good environmental status' and £50,000 to assist in supporting the delivery of the national Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) programme. Members discussed a recommendation that the underspend be committed to the vessel replacement fund including the build and commission of a new 6m open rigid inflatable boat (RIB). This new RIB would operate in tandem with the new main vessel, when delivered, during Spring 2025. Natural England representative Claire Argent questioned if it was suitable to use grant funding to support the purchase of the new RIB and if such a purchase would meet the original grant criteria. The Treasurer and Chief Officer reassured members that the new asset would support the delivery and objectives set out by DEFRA, and due to the delay in receiving 'the grant in aid' money, the funds were replacing money already spent to meet the objectives set out by Defra initially.
	Resolved - a) That the Statement of Accounts were approved as presented b) That Members Approved the Outturn position
14.	PROVISION OF SERVICES TO NEIFCA
	The Chief Officer presented a report to seek the Authority's approval for the continued provision of core services including Clerkship and Secretariat, Treasurer and financial services, Human Resources and Legal services through East Riding of Yorkshire Council with effect from 1 July 2024 until end of March 2029. Members discussed the location of the Authority meetings and the possibility of holding them at different locations across the district. Members also suggested that the number of attendees required at a meeting, in order for the meeting to be quorate should be reviewed alongside the overall review of the Authority's standing orders.
	Resolved – That Authority members consider the report and approve the continued provision of the following core services through East Riding of Yorkshire Council,

	with effect from 1 July 2024 for a further period of five financial years until the 31 March 2029:- (i) Clerkship (ii) Treasurer and financial services (iii) Human Resources (iv) Legal
15.	SCIENCE ADVISORY GROUP UPDATE – 08 MARCH 2024 & 21 MAY 2024
	The Chair of SAG & the Environmental & Scientific Manager presented a report to update members on the most recent proceedings of the Science Advisory Group (SAG) following meetings held on 8 March and 21 May 2024. Members questioned if there had been any further reports of wash-ups in the NEIFCA district, the Chief Officer informed members that capital dredging commenced on the 20 th May 2024, on the 23rd May officers received reports of wash-ups in the Tees area. NEIFCA officers carried out beach patrols and had no immediate concerns. The Chief Officer reassured members that officers were working with partner agencies to agree on some common species, such as the shore crab, which would be closely monitored to act as an indicator for concern.
	Resolved – That the report be noted.
16.	EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC
	That the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item (Minutes 16) on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information defined in Paragraphs 8 and 9 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
	Resolved – that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item (minutes 16).
17.	MANAGEMENT OF PERMITTED INTERTIDAL AND SUB-TIDAL FIXED NET FISHERIES 2024/2025
	The Chief Officer presented a report to update members on the planned process and timelines for opening the Holderness Coast permitted intertidal and sub-tidal fixed net fisheries on 1 October 2024. It was proposed that applications for both intertidal and sub-tidal permits are opened on 10 June 2024 with a provisional closing date of 28 June 2024.
	Resolved – That the report be noted.
18.	CHIEF OFFICERS OPERATIONAL REPORT

	The Chief Officer presented a report to provide members with a comprehensive and detailed operational summary covering the period December 2023 to May 2024, which included an update on the new vessel build and progress on the marketing and sale of the current patrol vessel North Eastern Guardian III.
	Resolved – That the notes be received.
19.	FISHERIES STATUTES AND REGULATIONS - PROSECUTIONS
	The Clerk submitted a report on the fisheries enforcement activities taken by the Authority for the period December 2023 to April 2024.
	Resolved – That the notes be received.
20.	NEIFCA BYELAW UPDATE
	<p>The Chief Officer presented a report to inform Members on progress with the following byelaws which were made at a meeting of the Authority held on 1 December 2022:</p> <p>XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022</p> <p>The key aims of the new byelaw are to establish a new flexible management framework which will more effectively cover the exploitation of listed shellfish species throughout the NEIFCA district, both offshore and onshore. The new proposed byelaw will also consolidate existing byelaw regulations and introduce an effort management system for commercial potting within the district. Since the making of the byelaw on 1 December 2022 it has been subject to further internal quality assurance checks, informal consultation with fishing groups and wider formal statutory consultation which completed on 27 October 2023. In line with the statutory process the draft byelaw regulation and supporting documentation was sent to the Marine Management Organisation for a Quality Assurance assessment on 11 January 2024 with a recommendation that it be further considered for formal confirmation by Defra. The first iteration of the MMO QA process was received back from the MMO for comment on 11 April 2024 and officers were currently in the process of evaluating that. Officers anticipated that the QA process in relation to this byelaw would take a further two to three months to complete.</p> <p>XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022</p> <p>Whilst retaining all existing management measures in relation to fishing activities within the boundaries of the Humber Estuary the new byelaw included a revision to the boundaries of an existing protected area to support the expansion of eel grass habitat. Following completion of the statutory consultation process on 27 October 2023, the outcome was published on the NEIFCA website on 11 January 2024 and stakeholders notified via email. In line with the statutory process the draft byelaw regulation and supporting documentation was also sent to the Marine Management Organisation for a Quality Assurance assessment on 11 January 2024 with a recommendation that it be further considered for formal confirmation by Defra. The first iteration of the MMO QA process was received back from the MMO for</p>

	comment on 3 April 2024 and officers were currently in the process of evaluating that. Officers anticipated that the QA process in relation to this byelaw would take just over a month to complete.
	Resolved - That the notes be received.
21.	REPORTS FROM PARTNER AGENCIES AND BODIES
	Reports from the partner agencies were unavailable at the time of printing. MMO representative Christian Proud and Natural England Representative provided a verbal update at the meeting.
	Resolved - That the notes be received.
22.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
	Members queried whether there was an out of hours contact telephone number available for members of the public to use to report incidents. The Chief Officer discussed a stand-by/callout policy which was in the early stages of development and consultation with staff, which would include the provision of an out of hours contact number. The Chief Officer recommended to members that the matter be referred to the Executive Committee to oversee the development of a supporting service provision.
	Resolved – That standby and callout provisions be referred to the Executive Committee.
	The meeting closed at 13:00

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

05 SEPTEMBER 2024

Present

Cllr David Chance (Vice Chair)
Mr Graham Collins
Andrew Wheeler
Cllr Tim Norman

Representing

North Yorkshire Council
MMO appointee
MMO Appointee
East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Clerk Darren Stevens, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Treasurer Stephen Chandler, East Riding of Yorkshire Council and David McCandless, NEIFCA Chief Officer, also attended the meeting.

The meeting took place in County Hall, Beverley, the meeting commenced at 9.30am.

89.	APOLOGIES
	Apologies for absence received from Prof Mike Elliott and Cllr Neil Swannick
90.	DECLARATION OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS
	Resolved – The Chair asked Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests with respect to items on the Agenda and the nature of such interests. No such interests were declared.
91.	TO TAKE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 07 MARCH 2024 AS A CORRECT RECORD
	Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2024 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
92.	BUDGET MONITORING 2024/2025
	Treasurer Stephen Chandler advised Members of the budget position at the end of month 3 (June) in 2024/25. At the end of June 2024, the Authority has net expenditure of £295,156 against an expected £362,701 underspending by £67,546. The forecast outturn underspend is £156,431, mainly due to underspends on employees relating to vacancies and additional interest receipts due to the level of reserves set aside for the patrol vessel replacement. Any underspend at the end of the financial year will help towards the build of the new vessel.
	Resolved – The 2024/2025 budget monitoring position is noted.
93.	STRATEGIC AND OPERATION RISK REGISTER - REVIEW
	The Chief Officer, David McCandless presented a report to inform members that in accordance with the Authority's Risk Management Strategy, a six monthly review of the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers had been undertaken and reported for information.

	Key risks identified included staffing and financial relating to the sale of NEG III. The Chief Officer provided updated positions provided in relation to both.
	Resolved – The revised Strategic and Operational Risk Register is noted and should be reviewed in six months' time.
94.	NEIFCA STANDBY AND CALLOUT POLICY
	Chief Officer David McCandless presented a Standby & Call out policy to members which set out a framework for the designation of an 'out of hours' officer point of contact through a rota system alongside terms and conditions and additional remuneration for acting in such a role. Officers would be given the option to opt in or out of such a scheme and those officer's choosing to opt in would be retained on a list which would be rotated around units of one week. Members agreed that the provision would enhance the service to stakeholders.
	Resolved – (a) Members noted the report (b) Members recommended the Standby & Call Out Policy be approved and adopted.
95.	STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS – ANNUAL REVIEW
	Chief Officer David McCandless presented a report to seek members approval to adopt the amendments to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations In line with the recommendations of the 2024 NEIFCA Internal Audit a review of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations has been completed by the Treasurer and Clerk in consultation with the Chief Officer and some minor changes have been made which are included in the report.
	Resolved – (a) Members noted the report (b) Members agreed that the revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be approved and adopted.
96.	NEIFCA ANNUAL AUDIT 2023/2024
	The Clerk and Chief Officer presented a report to inform Members of the findings of the annual audit. The overall assurance opinion is substantial, maintaining the level achieved in the 2022/2023 audit. A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
	Resolved – Members noted the report.
97.	CHIEF OFFICERS OPERATIONAL UPDATE
	Chief Officer David McCandless presented a report to provide members with an operational update covering the period March 2024 to August 2024. The report focused on the development of the new build vessel with a visual update provided for members by Deputy Chief Ian Davies. The new vessel is currently on budget and schedule with delivery expected for April 2025. Discussions held by members on launch strategy of the new vessel with the Chief Officer reporting help with this would be sought from both ERYC and NYC press offices.
	Resolved - Members noted the report.

98.	HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY & SAFE WORKING PRACTICES 2024/2025 - REVIEW
	Chief Officer David McCandless advised members of the completion of the six monthly review of the Authority's Health & Safety provisions. Since the last review reported to the Executive Committee on 7 March 2024 there had been no notable incidents or accidents to report to members. The provision of mandatory stab vests removed in March 2024 had been continuously monitored and risk level had not changed.
	Resolved - Members noted the report.
99.	NEIFCA BYELAWS UPDATE
	Chief Officer Davis McCandless presented a report to members to update them on the progress of the 3 byelaws made recently by the authority. Both the Shellfish Permit Byelaw and the Humber Estuary Byelaw were currently in second stage quality assurance with the MMO. Once this process was complete, they would then pass to the Minister in London for formal sign off. Most likely this would run into the first few months of 2025. The Beam Trawling Byelaw was currently the subject of formal public consultation. To date two responses had been received from hobby fishermen affected by the draft proposals. In response, the Chief Officer advised members that an exception had been added to the draft byelaw which would enable hobby fishermen to continue using a single 2.5m beam trawl without the need for an additional permit. This new byelaw would be 'fast tracked' due to the emergency byelaw expiring in January 2025.
	Resolved - Members noted the report.
100.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
	No items recorded.
	The meeting closed at 11.20

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NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Authority Meeting
5 December 2024

BUDGET MONITORING 2024/25

Report by the Treasurer

A. Purpose of Report

To advise Members of the budget position at the end of month 7 (October) in 2024/25.

B. Recommendations

- i. That the budget monitoring position is noted.
- ii. That the £90,000 underspend relating to Defra 'grant in aid' is transferred to the Renewals Fund as outlined in paragraph 2.3.
- iii. That the balance of any remaining underspend at outturn be transferred to the Renewals Fund.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A detailed budget monitoring exercise is undertaken monthly by the Treasurer in consultation with the Chief Officer. This analyses individual budget lines in terms of the current expenditure and allows for projections to the end of the financial year.
- 1.2 This report provides the overall position and any areas whereby an explanation is required of any notable variance on the Authority's spending to the end of October 2024.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 8 December 2023, the Authority set a levy totalling £1,535,873 for the current financial year, including £102,900 transferred to the Renewals Fund and £10,000 transferred to the Vehicle Replacement Reserve.

2. Revenue Expenditure to 31 October 2024

- 2.1 Appendix A summarises the expenditure and income for the Authority for the seven months to October of the financial year and compares it with the budget. The appendix shows both subjective and objective net expenditure for the period.

- 2.2 At the end of October 2024, the Authority has net expenditure of £686,088 against an expected £826,560 underspending by £140,472. The forecast outturn underspend is £263,224. The majority of the underspend is as a consequence of the patrol vessel replacement project, planned delays in recruitment to vacant posts in the offshore team and temporarily increased bank interest receipts.
- 2.3 The underspend includes £90,000 additional Defra 'grant in aid', relating to 2023/24 financial year and received in 2024/25, made up of £50,000 allocated to support the Marine Protected Area and delivery towards 'good environmental status' and £40,000 towards Marine Sustainable Development. At the Executive meeting on 7 March 2024 (Minute 81 refers) it was agreed in principle and subsequently endorsed at the Authority meeting on 6 June 2024 (Minute 13 refers), that this 'grant in aid' funding would be used to support the build and commission of a new 6.5m 'boarding' rigid inflatable boat (RIB) a component of the new vessel build project and it is proposed that any underspend resulting from the receipt of the grant is transferred to the Renewals fund at the end of the financial year. It is uncertain whether any further tranches of grant funding will be awarded for the 2024-25 year.
- 2.4 The main variances in the forecast outturn are:
- Employee underspends of £115,561 – mainly due to underspends from delaying recruiting to vacancies in the offshore team until the position on the patrol vessel replacement and sale of existing vessel is clearer. The forecast includes provision for payment of the flat rate £1,290 pay award (or 2.5% for the highest grades) which has now been agreed and will be paid in November 2024.
 - Patrol vessel running costs - overspend of £8,503 on vessel insurance. The current vessel insurance provision will be fully reviewed when the new patrol vessel is delivered.
 - Supplies & services – £67,691 overspend offset by a £61,300 underspend on support services. The variances are mainly due to the DEFRA funded lobster settlement project spending more on supplies & services (equipment and external services) and less on support services such as NEIFCA staff time and boat hire, than expected at the start of the project
 - Grants & Contributions - £81,653 underspend due to £90,000 Defra 'grant in aid' offset by in kind contributions towards the lobster settlement index project.
 - Other income - £74,145 overachievement of bank interest due to increases in interest rates and the level of reserves being set aside for the patrol vessel replacement. This will not be a reoccurring underspend as the majority of the reserves will be utilised to fund the new patrol vessel towards beginning of 2025/26 financial year.

Contact Officer

Liz Smith (liz.smith@eastriding.gov.uk)
Principal Accountant, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Stephen Chandler
Treasurer

NEIFCA Budget Monitoring Report as at October 2024

	<i>Approved Budget</i>	<i>Profiled Budget to Month 7</i>	<i>Actual to Month 7</i>	<i>Variance to Profile</i>	<i>Forecast Outturn</i>	<i>Variance to Forecast</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE						
Employee Expenses						
Pay,NI and Superannuation	874,200	509,950	411,457	-98,493	759,231	-114,969
Other Employee Costs	21,000	1,985	1,985	0	20,408	-592
Premises	18,030	10,518	16,074	5,557	20,162	2,132
Transport						
Patrol Vessel Running Costs	241,250	166,957	162,831	-4,126	243,742	2,492
Vehicle Running Costs	37,060	21,618	17,694	-3,924	34,203	-2,857
Travel and Subsistence	16,410	9,572	8,930	-642	13,002	-3,408
Supplies and Services	157,560	103,714	138,110	34,396	225,251	67,691
Support Services	179,690	37,286	6,404	-30,882	118,390	-61,300
	1,545,200	861,600	763,485	-98,115	1,434,390	-110,810
INCOME						
Grants and Contributions	-23,000	-13,417	-8,553	4,863	-104,653	-81,653
Other Income	-133,080	-21,624	-68,844	-47,220	-203,841	-70,761
	-156,080	-35,041	-77,398	-42,357	-308,494	-152,414
NET EXPENDITURE	1,389,120	826,560	686,088	-140,472	1,125,896	-263,224

	<i>Approved Budget</i>	<i>Profiled Budget to Month 7</i>	<i>Actual to Month 7</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>Forecast Outturn</i>	<i>Variance to Forecast</i>
	£	£	£		£	
NET EXPENDITURE						
Central / Headquarters	455,820	180,357	135,151	-45,205	381,162	-74,658
Land Based Operations	145,140	84,665	81,482	-3,183	143,521	-1,619
Offshore Operations	625,140	390,893	337,540	-53,352	563,153	-61,987
Environment	146,020	85,178	44,112	-41,066	106,037	-39,983
Grant Aided Projects	0	75,550	77,895	2,345	-84,976	-84,976
Patrol Vessel Replacement	17,000	9,917	9,906	-10	17,000	0
	1,389,120	826,560	686,088	-140,472	1,125,896	-263,224

	<i>Approved Budget</i>	<i>Profiled Budget to Month 7</i>	<i>Actual to Month 7</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>Forecast Outturn</i>	<i>Variance to Forecast</i>
	£	£	£		£	
REPRESENTED BY						
Annual levy on Local Authorities	-1,535,870	-1,535,870	-1,535,875	-5	-1,535,870	0
Contribution from Reserves	-55,690	0	0	0	-55,690	0
Contribution to Vehicle Replacement	10,000	0	0	0	10,000	0
Contribution to Renewals Fund	192,440	0	0	0	192,440	0
	-1,389,120	-1,535,870	-1,535,875	-5	-1,389,120	0

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Authority Meeting
5 December 2024

LEVY 2025/26 TO 2027/28

Report by the Treasurer

A. Purpose of Report

To determine the levy on member local authorities for 2025/26.

To highlight issues relating to the setting of the levy for 2026/27 and 2027/28.

B. Recommendations

- (i) That the proposed 10.5% levy increase for 2025/26 be approved by the Authority and the Clerk be authorised to issue demands on the relevant local authorities as presented at Appendix A.
- (ii) That the Authority acknowledges the issues affecting NEIFCA and their effect upon the levy for 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- (iii) That a detailed budget for 2025/26 be brought to the Authority for approval at the Executive meeting in March 2025.

1. Background

- 1.1 NEIFCA is a statutory body, made by Order on 1 October 2010 and vested with its full powers on 1 April 2011. Article 16 of the Order sets out that ‘the expenses incurred by the Authority must be defrayed by the relevant councils’, therefore NEIFCA has levying powers on the relevant councils. The relevant councils and the proportion of expenses that each must bear are set out in the Order and are shown at Appendix A.
- 1.2 In accordance with standing orders, all precepts or orders for the payment of money which the Authority from time to time may issue to respective councils shall require the consent of the majority of the council representatives attending such meeting.
- 1.3 Any motion to veto the total amount of expenses incurred by the Authority, must be sent in writing to the Clerk at least three clear working days before the meeting of the Authority. The Authority must give notice in writing of that motion to each Council member.

2. Levy Considerations and Proposals

- 2.1 At its meeting on 8 December 2023, the Authority agreed to increase the levy for the 2024/25 financial year by 11.5% to a total of £1,535,873 (Minute 74 refers). The increase was required to phase in the additional cost of the annual finance lease repayment for the build and commission of a new 24.5m Fisheries Patrol/Research vessel due to be operational in 2025. An indicative increase of 11.5% in 2025/26 and 2% in 2026/27 was proposed but not agreed. The levy was fixed for the period 2011/12 to 2016/17 and increased for the cost of inflationary increases in pay and other costs from 2017/18 to 2023/24.
- 2.2 The Bank of England's November monetary policy report describes an improving outlook for the UK economy as inflation stabilises around the 2% target despite continuing weak underlying economic growth. Inflation has fallen from a peak of 11% in 2022 down to 1.7% in September 2024 as prices continue to normalise following the global shocks that drove up inflation. The bank forecasts that inflation will increase to 2.7% in 2025 before falling back to the 2% target but notes that the forecast is uncertain as they cannot rule out the impact of global events, such as developments in the Middle East and that prices of some services are still rising too quickly. The bank has started to reduce interest rates is forecasting a gradual reduction from 4.75% in November 2024 to 3.7% in 2025. It is anticipated that interest rates will stabilise around 3.7% into 2027.
- 2.3 NEIFCA is continuing to experience effects of previously higher inflation as a pressure on wages, vessel and vehicle insurance and other supplies. In the Autumn Budget on 30 October 2024 the Chancellor announced that departmental resource and capital budgets beyond 2025/26 will be set by Phase 2 of the Spending Review due to conclude in late spring 2025. It is not yet known how this will impact on the specific grant local authorities receive for Inshore Fisheries and Conservation or if local authorities and in relation to potential future pressure on resources from other agencies on NEIFCA to perform additional work previously undertaken by them.
- 2.4 The National Joint Council (NJC) Local Government Pay Award for 2024/25 was agreed at £1,290 increase on pay points 2 to 43, which equates to a 5% increase for the lowest grades and a 2.5% for the higher pay points. The pay award is broadly in line with what was anticipated when the 2024/25 levy was set. It is not yet known if local authorities and IFCAs will be included in compensation to public sector employers for the increased rate of employer National Insurance Contributions from April 2025. It is forecast that the pay award will be 2% in 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28. The pay award and inflationary pressures require a levy increase of 3% in 2025/26.
- 2.5 The Special Authority Meeting on 30 June 2023 approved the decision for East Riding of Yorkshire Council Cabinet to award the contract for the build and commission of a new 24.5m Fisheries Patrol/Research vessel along with a proposed finance lease agreement with ERYC. Under the terms of the finance lease agreement NEIFCA will make a substantive payment towards the costs in year one utilising funds set aside in the Renewals Fund, capital receipts from the sale of the North-East Guardian III and any further additional funding that is subject to a bid to DEFRA. It was agreed that the remaining cost will be funded by ERYC borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board and the costs will be met by the finance leasing arrangement between ERYC and NEIFCA, funded by an increase to the levy. The vessel build is progressing well and it is anticipated that the new vessel will be commissioned in spring 2025.

- 2.6 The forecast annual finance lease repayment has been revised and reduced to £201,100 from £240,590 based on the latest build costs, the forecast balance in the Renewals Fund and estimated funds from sale of the North-East Guardian III. The reduction in the annual finance lease repayment means that the requested levy increase for 2025/26 can be reduced from the 11.5% proposed at the Authority Meeting on 8 December 2023 to 10.5%.
- 2.7 In putting forward these proposals the Clerk, Treasurer and Chief Officer are mindful that authorities are facing financial pressures of their own, in particular the pressure from higher employee costs and increasing demand for public services. The current outlook remains uncertain due to reduced income from fees and charges due to the increase in cost of living, inflationary pressures and delays in the reform of local government funding. With this in mind Members are asked to consider the proposed 10.5% levy increase for 2025/26 as shown in Appendix A.

3. Reserves

- 3.1 The NEIFCA General Reserve is forecast to be £228,450 as at 1 April 2025 (Appendix B).
- 3.2 Assuming the transfer of the forecast outturn underspend at October of £263,224 is approved, the balance on the Renewals Fund is forecast to be £2,164,646 as at 1 April 2025. The reserve balance includes £240,000 for the build and commission of the new 6.5m 'boarding' rigid inflatable boat (RIB), as part of the new vessel build project, made up of £150,000 approved at the Authority Meeting on 6 June 2024 and £90,000 Defra 'grant in aid' requested to be transferred to reserves at the 2024/25 financial year end in the October budget monitoring report.
- 3.3 The Renewals Fund will be used to fund a one payment estimated to be £1,924,646 towards finance lease for the new vessel in 2025/26. The Levy proposals also include a contribution to the Renewals Fund of £102,900 for the future replacement of a new main vessel at the end of its useful life in 2045. The Renewals Fund balance is forecast to fall to £342,900 as at 31 March 2026.

Contact Officer

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Principal Accountant, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Stephen Chandler
Treasurer

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY LEVY 2025/26

Appendix A

LOCAL AUTHORITY	Allocation	2024/25 Levy	2025/26 Levy	Increase in 2025/26 Levy	Increase in 2025/26 Levy	2026/27 Levy	Increase in 2026/27 Levy	Increase in 2026/27 Levy	2027/28 Levy	Increase in 2027/28 Levy	Increase in 2027/28 Levy
	%	£	£	£	%	£	£	%	£	£	%
Durham County Council	5.56	85,395	94,361	8,966	10.5	96,248	1,887	2.0	98,173	1,925	2.0
East Riding of Yorkshire Council	22.22	341,271	377,105	35,834	10.5	384,647	7,542	2.0	392,340	7,693	2.0
Hartlepool Borough Council	2.77	42,544	47,011	4,467	10.5	47,951	940	2.0	48,910	959	2.0
Hull City Council	11.11	170,635	188,552	17,917	10.5	192,323	3,771	2.0	196,169	3,847	2.0
North East Lincolnshire Council	11.11	170,635	188,552	17,917	10.5	192,323	3,771	2.0	196,169	3,847	2.0
North Lincolnshire Council	5.56	85,395	94,361	8,966	10.5	96,248	1,887	2.0	98,173	1,925	2.0
North Yorkshire County Council	22.22	341,271	377,105	35,834	10.5	384,647	7,542	2.0	392,340	7,693	2.0
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council	2.77	42,544	47,011	4,467	10.5	47,951	940	2.0	48,910	959	2.0
South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	5.56	85,395	94,361	8,966	10.5	96,248	1,887	2.0	98,173	1,925	2.0
Stockton on Tees Borough Council	5.56	85,395	94,361	8,966	10.5	96,248	1,887	2.0	98,173	1,925	2.0
Sunderland City Council	5.56	85,395	94,361	8,966	10.5	96,248	1,887	2.0	98,173	1,925	2.0
		1,535,873	1,697,140	161,267	10.5	1,731,083	33,943	2.0	1,765,704	34,622	2.0

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

RESERVES

General Reserve	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	228,450	228,450
Transfer from Revenue	0	0
Transfer to Revenue	0	0
Balance carried forward	<u>228,450</u>	<u>228,450</u>
Patrol Vessel Maintenance	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	88,689	50,000
Transfer from Revenue	0	0
Transfer to Revenue	-38,689	0
Balance carried forward	<u>50,000</u>	<u>50,000</u>
External Projects	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	8,898	8,898
Transfer from Revenue	0	0
Transfer to Revenue	0	0
Balance carried forward	<u>8,898</u>	<u>8,898</u>
Vehicle Replacement Reserve	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	32,782	22,782
Transfer from Revenue	10,000	10,000
Transfer to Revenue	-20,000	0
Balance carried forward	<u>22,782</u>	<u>32,782</u>
Renewals Fund	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	1,725,982	2,164,646
Transfer from Revenue	455,664	102,900
Transfer to Revenue	-17,000	-1,924,646
Balance carried forward	<u>2,164,646</u>	<u>342,900</u>
TOTAL USEABLE RESERVES	<u><u>2,474,776</u></u>	<u><u>663,030</u></u>

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Authority Meeting
5 December 2024

NEIFCA Byelaws Update

Report by the Chief Officer

A. Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members on progress with the following byelaws which were made at a meeting of the Authority held on 1 December 2022:

XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022
XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022

2. To inform Members on progress with the following byelaw which was made at the meeting of the Authority held on 6 June 2024:

XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024

B. Recommendation

1. That members receive the update and note the report.

1. Background

1.1 *XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022*

- 1.1.1 At the Authority meeting held on 1 December 2022 members supported the making of a new byelaw XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022 (Minute Item 32 refers).

The key aims of the new byelaw are to establish a new flexible management framework which will more effectively cover the exploitation of listed shellfish species throughout the NEIFCA district, both offshore and onshore. The new proposed byelaw will also consolidate existing byelaw regulations and introduce an effort management system for commercial potting within the district. The provisions contained within the byelaw will be applied via conditions attached to the permit which can be varied following an appropriate review process, without the need to formally remake the whole byelaw. Two permitting schemes will be established, Category 1 for licensed commercial vessels and Category 2 for recreational operators. It is proposed that during year one a maximum of 234 Category 1 permits will be offered and permit holders restricted to working a maximum of 1000 pots. A permit charge would also be levied for Category 1 permits linked to the number of pots worked. The number of Category 2 permits offered will remain unrestricted but a new £10 charge would be levied, and the number of pots permitted reduced from 10 to 5 per permit holder with daily bag limits remaining unchanged.

- 1.1.2 Since the making of the byelaw on 1 December 2022 it has been subject to further internal quality assurance checks, informal consultation with fishing groups and wider formal statutory consultation which completed on 27 October 2023.
- 1.1.3 During this process the following adjustments were made to the draft byelaw regulation:
- Prior to the commencement of formal consultation the scope of the byelaw was widened to include, European green crab, mussel, common periwinkle, pullet carpet shell, Norway Lobster, razor clam and scallop. This was felt prudent and necessary to improve the active management of intertidal shore gathering by large ethnic groups which has become an increasing issue in some areas of the NEIFCA district.
 - Prior to formal consultation additional provisions were also added to allow for the varying of fees and charges and the implementation of management by 'pot type' alongside a further provision clarifying that, in terms of Category 1 applications, first priority would be given to those vessels who held a permit on 1 December 2022.
 - The supporting Regulatory Impact Assessments were also updated to include some additional information from the 2023 shellfish landings report and intertidal shore gathering.
- 1.1.4 Following the completion of the formal statutory consultation process on 27 October 2023 the outcome was presented to members, alongside the proposed next steps, at the Authority meeting held on 8 December 2023 (Minute 75 refers). The outcome was published on the NEIFCA website on 11 January 2024 and stakeholders notified via email.
- 1.1.5 In line with the statutory process the draft byelaw regulation and supporting documentation was sent to the Marine Management Organisation for a Quality Assurance assessment on 11 January 2024 with a recommendation that it be further considered for formal confirmation by Defra. The first phase of the MMO QA process was received back from the MMO for comment on 11 April 2024.
- 1.1.6 Following a detailed review of the recommendations from the first phase of the MMO QA assessment the draft byelaw and supporting Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) were revised, updated and returned to the MMO for phase 2 assessment on 12 July 2024. Whilst all of the primary intentions of the draft byelaw have been retained, key changes relate to the structuring of the byelaw, further additions to the definition and permitting sections to improve clarity for stakeholders and the removal of the longstanding deeming clause.
- 1.1.7 The MMO returned the QA phase 2 response on 12 September 2024 and following a review the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised updated and returned to the MMO for phase 3 assessment on 24 September 2024. Officers expect the MMO QA phase 3 assessment to be returned sometime during the beginning of December 2024.
- 1.1.8 Officers anticipate that the QA process in relation to this byelaw will take a further two months to complete.

1.2 *XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022*

- 1.2.1 At the Authority meeting held on 1 December 2022 members supported the making of a new byelaw XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022 (Minute Item 31 refers).
- 1.2.2 Whilst retaining all existing management measures in relation to fishing activities within the boundaries of the Humber Estuary the new byelaw included a revision to the boundaries of an existing protected area to support the expansion of eel grass habitat.

- 1.2.3 Following completion of the statutory consultation process on 27 October 2023 the outcome was presented to members, alongside the proposed next steps, at the Authority meeting held on 8 December 2023 (Minute 75 refers). The outcome was published on the NEIFCA website on 11 January 2024 and stakeholders notified via email.
- 1.2.4 In line with the statutory process the draft byelaw regulation and supporting documentation was also sent to the Marine Management Organisation for a Quality Assurance assessment on 11 January 2024 with a recommendation that it be further considered for formal confirmation by Defra. The first phase of the MMO QA process was received back from the MMO for comment on 3 April 2024.
- 1.2.5 Following a detailed review of the recommendations from the first phase of the MMO QA assessment the draft byelaw and supporting Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) were revised, updated and returned to the MMO for phase 2 assessment on 12 July 2024. In line with the Shellfish Permit byelaw all the primary intentions of the draft Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw have been retained and key changes relate to grammar, detail and clarity for stakeholders.
- 1.2.6 The QA phase 2 assessment was received back from the MMO on 12 September 2024 and following a review both the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised, updated and returned to the MMO on 24 September 2024 for QA phase 3 assessment. The QA phase 3 assessment was received back from the MMO on 30 October 2024 and following a further review both the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised, updated and returned to the MMO on 15 November 2024 for QA phase 4 assessment which should represent the final phase before final confirmation by Defra. Officers anticipate that this byelaw will now be confirmed within the next two months.

1.3 **XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024**

- 1.3.1 At the Authority meeting held on 6 June 2024 members supported the making of a new byelaw XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024 (Minute 12 refers).
- 1.3.2 The key aims of the new byelaw are to replace the current emergency regulation with flexible management framework that will support the effective management of the king scallop stock from targeted beam trawling activity alongside any associated impacts on the wider environment in the medium to longer term.
- 1.3.3 Following the making of the byelaw on 6 June 2024 formal consultation commenced on 11 July 2024 and terminated on 23 August 2024. Alongside the formal consultative process officers submitted a written request to Defra for a six-month extension to the current emergency byelaw regulation until 17 January 2025 to enable the process of making and confirming the new replacement byelaw regulation to be completed before expiry. This was consented on 17 July 2024.
- 1.3.4 During the formal consultation process officers received two written responses from hobby vessel operators objecting to the proposed requirement to hold and pay a fee for an additional permit to use a small beam trawl. Following consideration of the two objections and a review by the Executive Committee on 3 September 2024, an exemption was added to the byelaw to enable hobby operators to use a single beam trawl, not exceeding 2.5m in length, without the need to hold an additional permit.
- 1.3.5 The draft byelaw regulation and supporting RIA was submitted to the MMO for QA stage 1 review on 13 September 2024 and was received back on 30 October 2024. Following a review both the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised, updated and returned to the MMO for QA stage 2 review on 15 November 2024. Throughout the ongoing processes officers have maintained close dialogue with both the MMO and Defra to ensure, as far as possible,

that the new byelaw will be confirmed before the emergency regulation expires on 17 January 2025.

1.4 **Summary Update**

1.4.1 **XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022**

Made on 1 December 2022. Currently in MMO Quality Assurance stage 3 as of 27 September 2024. Projected to be confirmed April 2025.

1.4.2 ***XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022***

Made on 1 December 2022. Currently in MMO Quality Assurance stage 4 as of 15 November 2024. Projected to be confirmed January 2025.

1.4.3 **XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024**

Made on 6 June 2024. Currently in MMO Quality Assurance stage 2 as of 15 November 2024. Projected to be confirmed January 2025.

Contact Officer

David McCandless, Chief Officer

Ext. 3690

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Authority Meeting
5 December 2024

Chief Officer's Operational Update

Report of the Chief Officer

A. **Purpose of Report**

To provide members with an operational report covering the period 1 June 2024 to 30 November 2024.

B. **Recommendation**

That Members note the report.

1. **Overview**

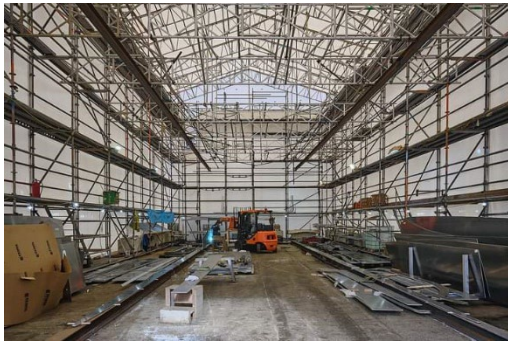
1.1 **NEIFCA**

New Vessel Build

Following the formal decisions taken during June 2023 to progress the build and commission of a new fisheries vessel to replace North Eastern Guardian III (NEG III) and the award of contract to Whitby based shipbuilders, Parkol Marine Ltd, on 6 October 2023, fabrication work commenced during February 2024. The first stage of the construction phase involved laying the keel through to the completion of the framing of the twin hulls in May and associated plating, including the main deck sections in July followed by the accommodation sections during September. Housing for the shafts and main engines was completed at the end of September and construction of the wheelhouse, the last section of the main superstructure, during October. Internal 'fit out' commenced during November with the installation of pipework, cable runs and internal insulating layers. Main engine installation is expected to commence at the beginning of December.

Regular updates on the build can be accessed via the Authority's website and via Parkol Marine Ltd at New Build, Yard No 64.

The following images document some of the key milestone changes:



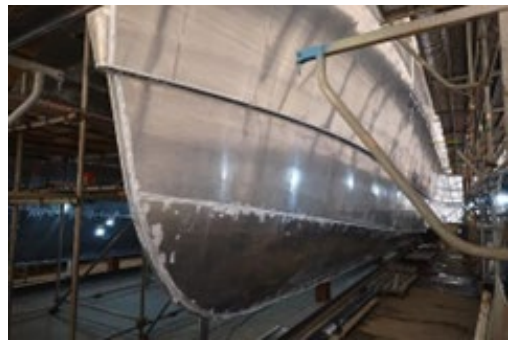
February 2024 laying the keel



March 2024 hull framing



April to August 2024 hull plating



April to August 2024 hull plating



September 2024 Foredeck from wheelhouse



September 2024 deck house & accommodation structure



October 2024 wheelhouse structure



November 2024 - internal 'fit out' and bow thruster penetrations

Currently the new vessel build remains on track for delivery during the Spring of 2025 and also on budget.

Sale of North Eastern Guardian III (NEG III)

NEG III was formally marketed for sale during May 2024 as part of a closed electronic tender process. A deadline of 31 July 2024 was set for receipt of bids which was subsequently extended to 7 August 2024. Despite a very good level of interest in the vessel it remained unsold and following consultation with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) procurement team, the Clerk and Treasurer, a second informal sale process was commenced on 12 August 2024. In response to that secondary process, two firm bids were received and following consultation with the Chair and Treasurer one of those bids was formally accepted on Monday 25 November 2024, subject to contract, with a provisional date of 31 January 2025 set for completion and delivery. The successful bidder is a maritime company based outside the UK in Northern Europe.

Enforcement & Compliance Work

Since June, inshore fishing activity has followed normal seasonal patterns and throughout much of the summer period the East coast enjoyed reasonably settled, warm weather which broke during September but settled again through October. Commercial catches of lobster were generally good with encouraging reports of improved edible crab catches, across parts of the district, during September. Prices, however, remained generally low through summer with lobster fetching an average of just £12.50 per Kg. Catches and landings from Redcar to Hartlepool also appear to be improving with encouraging reports coming from both Authority's officers and inshore fishermen working in that region.

Throughout the summer there were some good reports from the recreational angling sector both from the shore and at sea. On shore there were some very good catches of smooth hound, particularly along the East Yorkshire coast and offshore, cod and ling from known wreck marks, particularly off the North Yorkshire coast. Positive reporting from the sector continued through October and November particularly from shore marks along the Redcar and Cleveland and Yorkshire coast and the North and South banks of the Humber Estuary with anglers landing sizeable codling, haddock and whiting.

From a compliance perspective, through the summer period, officers continued to struggle to manage persistently high levels of unregulated and illegal intertidal shellfish gathering, particularly at Redcar and occasionally North and East Yorkshire. Almost exclusively this has involved groups of Chinese nationals. This activity continued into September and October, during the larger tides, down as far as Bridlington beach with groups targeting razor clams, mussels, cockles, winkles and other species. Offshore, compliance issues relating to the illegal scrubbing of egg bearing lobsters and non-compliance with fishing gear marking regulations have been most prevalent throughout the reporting period.

Environmental & Scientific Work

Much of the recent work of the environmental and science team has involved the assessment and response to MMO quality assurance feedback relating to the Humber Estuary and Shellfish Permit byelaws and finalising the beam trawling byelaw for quality assurance submission. Alongside that the team also completed the final report for the ELSI project, ready to be submitted to DEFRA and all associated data has been worked up to MEDIN (Marine Environmental Data and Information Network) standard. Weather permitting, staff have also been undertaking offshore lobster, crab and King Scallop stock survey work onboard local fishing vessels.

Staffing & Recruitment

I am pleased to advise that since the last Authority meeting in June, two new staff members have now joined the Environmental and Scientific team. Rachel Waite-Hudson on 5 August 2024 and Julita Ruskyte on 2 October 2024. A further recruitment process to fill the two outstanding offshore vacancies is scheduled to commence before the Christmas break in time for the delivery and commissioning of the new vessel in the new year.

1.2 National Work streams

Fisheries Management plans

On 14 December 2024 Defra published 5 Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) including crab and lobster, sea bass, king scallop, whelk and Channel non-quota species. The development of FMPs is a key component of the 2020 Fisheries Act to inform future fisheries management policy delivery across a range of exploited stocks in the UK.

NEIFCA staff are currently directly involved in two of the current, national FMP implementation groups including crab and lobster and king scallop. One of the objectives in the crab and lobster FMP is to set up pilot scheme for the North East and South West, exploring and trialling fine scale management measures for the regions. The first focus of this pilot scheme will be to examine potential changes in the minimum landing size of lobsters. NEIFCA is a member of the supporting working group that has been setup for the lobster management trial and an initial meeting was held on 25 October 2024.

1.3 Priority Work streams for the next six months

- Monitoring construction of the new vessel through to delivery
- Finalising the sale and delivery of North Eastern Guardian III
- Submission of the finalised byelaws to DEFRA for confirmation 2025
- In terms of biological survey work, prioritising scallop dredge and beach net fisheries
- Further implementation of the new fisheries database including the capture of electronic catch and effort returns.

1.4 Summary of meetings and events attended

Authority meeting	6 th June 2024
Scallop FMP implementation meeting	11 th June 2024
CEFAS research update meeting	13 th June 2024
MMO/IFCA FMP meeting	17 th June 2024
Defra Emergency byelaw meeting	19 th June 2024
IFCA/MMO whelk FMP management meeting	19 th June 2024
NEIFCA Staffing meeting	20 th June 2024

IFCA Technical advisory group meeting	26 th June 2024
IFCA Chief Officers Group Meeting	26 th June 2024
NEIFCA/NIFCA/MMO Monthly TCG meeting	26 th June 2024
Coastal Health and Livelihood meeting	27 th June 2024
New vessel build progress meeting	2 nd July 2024
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Byelaw meeting	8 th July 2024
IFCA/MMO Strategic Operations Group	08 th July 2024
Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership (YMNP) executive	10 th July 2024
IFCA Chief Officers Group meeting	10 th July 2024
IFCA CLUE training	15 th July 2024
GYKF meeting	24 th July 2024
DEFRA wash up meeting	26 th July 2024
Bridlington Shellfish Festival	27 th July 2024
DEFRA fishing lives meeting	29 th July 2024
NEIFCA budget monitoring meeting	2 nd August 2024
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust meeting	7 th August 2024
Swansea University social science interview	7 th August 2024
NEIFCA recruitment process	12 th & 13 th August 2024
NEIFCA staff meeting	14 th August 2024
NEIFCA recruitment process	15 th August 2024
Blue Marine meeting – beam trawling byelaw	16 th August 2024
Scallop management harmonisation meeting – Seafish	16 th August 2024
National Intelligence system meeting	16 th August 2024
IFCA Chief Officers Group meeting	16 th August 2024
DEFRA Seabass meeting	20 th August 2024
IFCA FMP meeting	29 th August 2024
New vessel build progress meeting	3 rd September 2024

National Association of IFCAs Forum meeting	3 rd September 2024
NEIFCA Executive Committee meeting	5 th September 2024
King Scallop FMP Implementation Group	9 th September 2024
Whitby Hatchery research meeting	11 th September 2024
Scientific Advisory Group meeting	17 th September 2024
EU Workshop on Shared King Scallop Stocks	17 th September 2024
IFCA Chief Officers Group meeting	18 th September 2024
MMO North East Regional Fisheries Group meeting	18 th September 2024
MMO byelaw team – meeting	25 th September 2024
MMO/IFCA MPA fisheries assessments	25 th September 2024
King Scallop FMP Implementation Group	25 th September 2024
Coastal Health Comms meeting	26 th September 2024
IFCA/MMO/Defra management meeting	26 th September 2024
New vessel build progress meeting	1 st October 2024
Scallop industry meeting	3 rd October 2024
YMNP biodiversity group	3 rd October 2024
St-Andrews University – acoustic monitoring	4 th October 2024
NEIFCA staff meeting	9 th October 2024
Shellfish Association of GB AGM	10 th October 2024
IFCA MMO Strategic Operations Group	14 th October 2024
IFCA Chief Officers Group meeting	16 th October 2024
National Association of IFCAs Directors meeting	16 th October 2024
Small scale fisheries workshop	21 st & 22 nd Oct 2024
Lobster management pilot NE	25 th October 2024
NEIFCA Finance meeting	25 th October 2024
New vessel build progress meeting	5 th November 2024
Defra site visit shore netting	6 th November 2024
King Scallop FMP implementation group	6 th November 2024

IFCA Chief Officers Group Workshop	12 th & 13 th November 2024
IFCA/MMO licensing engagement	13 th November 2024
University of Newcastle – public values interview	18 th November 2024
YWT bait-digging workshop	20 th November 2024
Natural England meeting	26 th November 2024
IFCA Technical advisory group	27 th & 28 th Nov 2024

2.0 **NEIFCA Operational Reports**

2.1 **Land-based Work streams**

As weather conditions began to improve across the summer months fishing vessels worked longer, capitalising on the calm weather days.

The shore enforcement team maintained an intensive schedule of patrols and inspections on land & Sea in the NEIFCA district. Throughout the reporting period officers work hard to counteract the unregulated removal of shellfish and molluscs from inter tidal zones, particularly at Redcar. Strategies ranged from active engagement, monitoring and enforcement action when appropriate. These strategies were supported by active joint working with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority to identify and individuals or groups that have potentially been forced to collect shellfish.

A small contingent of vessels in the ports of Hartlepool and Redcar targeted fish species, mainly using nets throughout summer months to catch monk fish, turbot and soles,

Nomadic scallop dredging activity remained at low levels throughout the period, outside the NEIFCA district and mainly off the coast of Scarborough to Flamborough Head. Most of these vessels landed into the ports of Scarborough, Whitby, Hartlepool. Throughout the period Officers maintained active engagement with these vessels making operators aware of the associated legislation while transiting through the NEIFCA District

Towards the end of the reporting period Officers maintained active patrolling along the Holderness coast from Fraisthorpe down to Tunstall where 5 intertidal fixed nets are permitted by NEIFCA. Sea bass have been prominent in catches during the early part of the netting season and officers have been working closely with the permitted nets men to gather biological data from the fishery.

Whilst out on patrol officers engaged frequently with recreational anglers throughout the district and also attended the Redcar & Cleveland Sea anglers angling match at the start of the reporting period. As part of that engagement officers distributed useful educational leaflets notifying anglers of any species or bag limits that maybe subject to legislation within NEIFCA District. This engagement was received very positively.

Shore Officers continue to maintain full and active engagement with the joint Intelligence gathering programme coordinated by the MMO, reporting in any information and prioritising work around key targets. Intelligence gathering and reporting has led to a number of successful operations targeting illegal fishing within NEIFCA's district. Since

the beginning of the year over 80 intelligence reports have been submitted through this programme.

Outreach and Joint Working

Enforcement Officers work alongside a number of organisations and agencies on a regular basis and it is important that links with these groups are maintained. During the reporting period NEIFCA Officers conducted joint patrols with the following organisations:

- The Marine Management Organisation,
- Humberside Marine Police
- The Environment Agency
- Tees Harbour Police
- Northumbria Marine Police
- Gang Master & Labour Abuse Authority
- Centre for Environment, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Science CEFAS
- MCA
- Border Force / Immigration
- Food Crime
- Cleveland Police

Enforcement and Compliance Outputs

During the reporting period, 7 verbal warnings were issued and 10 offences reported to the Chief Officer for further review and consideration. The following inspections have been undertaken by the shore team covering the following fishing activities:

- Potting
- Recreational Angling
- Scallop Dredging
- Netting
- Limited Shellfish Permits
- Unattended inspections
- Trawlers
- Premises Inspections

2.2 Offshore Work streams – Monthly Activity Summary

June

During June the offshore team prepared North Eastern Guardian III (NEG III) for annual slipping and marketing for sale. Staff also visited a newly commissioned catamaran vessel in Eyemouth which is of similar design to the new vessel under build in Whitby. The Authority's 6.4m RIB, Bravo 1, was active throughout June conducting vessel boardings and stock assessment surveys in the Whitby area.

July

During July NEG III and Bravo 1 undertook sea patrols throughout the NEIFCA district. During July licensed fixed netting targeting migratory seatrout, closed in the Whitby area, as per licensing conditions with only average returns reported. The Scarborough, Filey and Bridlington areas. continued to fish on until the end of August. Prices for Sea trout

averaged between £15-£20 per kilo. One vessel in the Bridlington area reported daily catches of 240kg but impacted by heavy grey seal predation. Shellfish prices in the South of the district reached £2.30/kg for male brown crab, £1.60/kg for female brown crab and £13/kg for lobster. During the second week of July NEG III was slipped at the Parkol drydock in Whitby for two weeks annual maintenance. On 27 July 2024, officers represented NEIFCA at the Bridlington shellfish festival.

August

On 6 August 2024 Bravo I undertook some patrol work to the South of Bridlington to monitoring compliance with static fishing gear marking regulations. 34 non-compliant markers were tagged in the Bridlington-Hornsea area. The tagging system provides a warning to fishermen to mark their fishing gear accordingly prior to seizure.

On 17 August 2024 Bravo 1 provided safety vessel coverage for the Whitby Swimming Regatta, raising the profile of the IFCA within the local district. During August the Authority's 9.5m cabin RIB, Protector III, returned from the Delta shipyard, following some planned repair and upgrading work, and sea trials were completed on the 20 August 2024. Whilst undertaking offshore patrol work large herring marks were observed on the vessel's sonar equipment, this was later confirmed and observed when undertaking boardings of potting vessels, who reported hauling pots containing considerable quantities of live herrings.

September

During September the offshore team supported the shore operations team carrying out joint patrol work within the district and also the Deputy Chief Officer who is currently leading the management and oversight of the new vessel build.

October

During October some maintenance issues were resolved onboard NEG III including a bow thruster fault and the replacement of some relay switches.

The onboard Forward Looking Infra Red (FLIR) camera which had been removed from NEG III for servicing was returned. This camera, valued at £70K will be mounted on the new build vessel.

During the month an offence was detected, angling for Bass in the no-take zone at Sewerby. The vessels Skipper was escorted out of the zone and was given a verbal warning. A single nomadic scalloper was also intercepted East of Flamborough Head dredging just beyond the Authority's district the vessel was displaying its AIS and no offence was observed being committed.

Sei Whales were also observed within the district, mainly in the 3-4 nm stream sometimes numbering as many as six in one group

November

During November lobster prices reached £17/kg and the brown crab price, £1.80 for females and £2.30 for males. Protector III took over the bulk of the offshore patrol effort. Two out of the three permitted scallopers were observed fishing in the seasonal scallop boxes and monitored on a number of patrols. No nomadic scallopers were observed. One

member of the offshore team assisted the shore team and the Environment Agency with illegal gill netting close to Whitby, resulting in an offence being recorded.

Offshore Enforcement and Compliance Summary

North Eastern Guardian III

Number of Patrols: 11
Nautical miles covered: 496
Fishing Vessel Inspections: 73

Protector III

Number of Patrols: 13
Nautical miles covered: 1056
Fishing Vessel Inspections: 148

Bravo I

Number of Patrols: 9
Nautical miles covered: 235.2
Boardings: 4

2.3 Environmental/Science Work streams

2.3.1 Consents and Licensing

The NEIFCA district is of great interest to many commercial parties and operators. The list of activities includes, but is not limited to, offshore renewables (wind and tidal), gas cavern development, harbour works, maintenance and capital dredge activities, pipeline and cable corridors/landfall and mine discharge. As a relevant authority, NEIFCA is consulted on all developments within and abounding the district, including the issuing of marine consents or licenses relating to any form of discharge or abstraction.

Applications relating to marine developments can be numerous and each one is considered both independently and cumulatively with any other neighbouring activities. Authority Officers also often play an active role in working groups established for the monitoring and surveillance of developments. The following applications were reviewed between June 2024 and December 2024.

Title	Date reviewed
German Space Agency rocket launch	17/06/2024
TGN Cable decommissioning	15/07/2024
Stronger Shores Scientific Sensor Array	15/07/2024
A63 Castle Street Hull, Humber Dock West Wall	12/07/2024
Middlehaven Dock Estuary Edges Project	12/07/2024
Middlesborough Quays 1 & 2 dredging and disposal	20/08/2024
Scarborough harbour dredging	27/08/2024
Proposed Additional Dolphin at Able Seaton Port Quay 1	24/09/2024
Immingham Green Energy Terminal Marine Test Piles	27/09/2024
H2 Teeside grond investigations _geotechnical survey	27/09/2024

River Tees Turning Circle_Estuary Edges Project	27/09/2024
Stallinborough Phase 3 sea defence improvement scheme	27/09/2024

2.3.2 ELSI project update

The project has come to an end and a final report has been drafted and to be submitted by the 15th December 2024. Between May and October 2024, plankton tows were undertaken across the district, from Redcar to Withernsea. Local industry vessels were hired and in collaboration with the University of Hull a total of 78 plankton tows were completed. The University of Hull has completed the analysis of all the plankton and settlement cage samples and all the data are going to be submitted to MEDIN (Marine Environmental Data and Information Network). To date, only 1 Early Benthic Phase lobsters has been found off Flamborough Head, highlighting the challenges in finding these juvenile lobsters. The results of the plankton surveys demonstrate a clear difference in density between North and South of Scarborough with higher density of planktonic lobster larvae in the southern part of the district. The highest number of planktonic lobster larvae throughout the summer were recorded in July. NEIFCA will continue the work, focusing on improvements to the settlement cages and locations and planktonic larval distribution. The overall aim of this work is to improve stock assessment and the results of this study are an important steppingstone for further research and trials.

2.3.3 Survey Programme Update

Between May 2024 and October 2024, with the support of the, biometric data for 174 Shore Operations Team 7 lobsters and 485 edible crabs were collected across 4 observer trips and 14 boardings on fishing vessels.

Between June 2024 and November 2024, the Environmental and Shore Operations Team completed 31 quayside sampling trips in three major ports of the district (Bridlington, Scarborough and Whitby). Biometric data for 2678 lobster and 1767 edible crabs were collected across these three ports.

The annual Eelgrass survey was completed in collaboration with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in July 2024. The outcome of this survey was used to inform the Scientific Advisory Group and current Humber Estuary Byelaw.

In September 2024, a local trawler was hired for the annual Scallop dredging surveys in and around the North and South Box and a total of 36 tows were completed. The outcome and state of the stocks will be included in an annual stock monitoring report and presented to the Scientific Advisory Group in March 2025.

2.3.4 Outreach

Environmental and Scientific Officers delivered presentation on careers in Marine Science, the local marine ecology and fisheries and NEIFCA's role at the following events:

- Driffield career event – Driffield show grounds

3.0 **National Meetings Update**

3.1 *National IFCA Chief Officers Group*

At present the Chief Officer's group meets monthly and is made up of the most senior IFC Officers in the U.K. Group membership also includes Officers from Fisheries Departments located in the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey.

The group provides an extremely valuable mechanism for the discussion and exchange of information relating to operational and legislative matters affecting 'day to day' activities within IFCA's and NEIFCA currently provides the Secretariat to the group.

Since the last meeting of the Authority NEIFCA was represented at seven meetings held on 26 June, 10 July, 16 August, 18 September, 16 October and the 12 and 13 November 2024.

3.2 *National Association of IFCA's Forum & Directors Meetings*

The national Association of IFCA's was formally established on 17 March 2011 following resolution and adoption of draft Articles by majority vote. NEIFCA's interests within the group are represented by the Chair, Vice Chair and Chief Officer.

The national Association is structured as a Company by Limited Guarantee with listed Directors and members and its Articles reflect that structure and governance. This enables the Association to employ its own staff (currently Chief Executive, a full-time support Officer and a fixed term project officer) and conduct its business within a properly structured legal framework. One Director is appointed by each of the member IFCA's currently the Chief Officer and the wider membership of the Association or forum comprises of three representatives from each member IFCA, currently the Chairman and Chief Officer. The board of Directors meet after the forum to consider business and actions resulting from it. The Chief Executive is a Director of the Association as are the elected Chairman and Vice Chairman of the wider members Forum.

Since the last meeting of the Authority NEIFCA was represented at one forum meeting and one Directors meeting held on 3 September and 16 October respectively.

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Chief Officer
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NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Authority Meeting
5 December 2024

Science Advisory Group Update

Report by the Chair of SAG & the Environmental & Scientific Manager

A. Purpose of Report

To update members on the most recent proceedings of the Science Advisory Group (SAG) following meetings held on 17 September 2024.

B. Recommendation

That members note the report and consider the Group's recommendations.

1. Background

- 1.1 Since the last Authority meeting held on 6 June 2024, one meeting of the SAG was held on 17 September 2024 and is summarised below.

At the meeting members considered the following items:

- Elect chair
- European Lobster Settlement Index (ELSI) update
- Emergency Byelaw 2023
- Eelgrass survey 2023
- Permit & Catch Return system

Election of chair

All members agreed to elect Claire Argent, Natural England Representative, as chair for another year.

ELSI update

Environmental & Scientific Manager Ralf Bublitz presented a report to update members on the ELSI Project with the results. The group advised to improve the settlement cages using substrates to better simulate the seabed features in the settlement cages for example waterpipe and the creation of flat ledges so that larvae could settle below them. Funding from DEFRA's Fishing Industry Science Partnership (FISP) programme has now ended and the project is scheduled for completion by the end of October. Environmental & Scientific Manager Ralf Bublitz explained how the research could be taken further by using

a camera to record how the larvae disperse and interact around the cage when released, funding for this is under review.

Scallop Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024

Environmental & Scientific Manager Ralf Bublitz updated the group of beam trawling activity in 2024 and compared it to 2023 using the results from the scientific dispensation scheme implemented through the Emergency Beam Trawl Byelaw in July 2023. Since the beginning of the 2023/24 scallop dredging season 77.7 tonnes have been landed by beam trawling compared to 48.7 tonnes that have been landed by dredging. Environmental & Scientific Manager Ralf Bublitz explained that, on average, the CPUE is higher for beam trawling than dredging, this is attributed to the location of fishing grounds available. The majority of dredging takes place in the North Box which has led to a decrease in stocks. Due to the timing of the meeting there was not sufficient time to create a more accurate assessment of the stock, which would aid in the recommendation of management. It was discussed that a precautionary approach should be taken which would result in the closure of the North Box until further analysis of the data is available.

Eelgrass survey 2024

Environmental & Scientific Officer Rachel Waite-Hudson presented a report to members on the outcome of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's annual Spurn eelgrass survey. The number of eelgrass cells has increased from 2023 with the majority of growth in the north of the eelgrass bed. There was a loss of eelgrass that followed the inside boundary of the protected area in the centre of the eelgrass bed.

Rebecca Lynam partook in the data collection for the survey and expressed that human error likely caused the appearance of a large loss of eelgrass in the centre of the eelgrass bed, additionally diversions were made due to terns at the survey site. Clare Fitzimmons highlighted the improvement of satellite imagery and suggested this be considered in the future. As the Humber Estuary Byelaw approaches sign off, the extension of the prohibition box will aid in the stability of eelgrass and hopefully promote new areas of eelgrass growth.

Any other business

Assistant Operational Support Officer, Emma Jones presented the new permit and catch return system and its functionality. Members were shown how the new system will work for stakeholders to submit their own catch returns and the features that they will be able to access to assess their own catch rates. MMO representative Andrew Earle raised a query with regards to stakeholders being able to access their own data, as issues had arisen with this through the MMO app. Assistant operational officer Emma Jones agreed to contact the GDPR representative at ERYC to advise on this.

Contact Officer

David McCandless,
Chief Officer,
Ext. 3690

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Authority Meeting
5 December 2024

Fisheries Statutes and Regulations Prosecutions

Report of the Clerk of the Authority.

A. Purpose of Report

To provide information on prosecutions taken by the Authority during the period 1 June 2024 to 30 November 2024.

B. Recommendation

That Members note the report.

1. Background

1.1 Information on prosecutions and sanctions taken on behalf of the Authority are submitted to each meeting of member's information.

1.2 Attached is a schedule of prosecutions and sanctions covering the period since 1 December 2023.

1.3 As an alternative to a prosecution, the Authority can also offer a Financial Administrative Penalty or FAP. The 2011 'Sea Fishing (Penalty Notices) England Order provides the mechanism for the Authority to issue fixed penalties for a range of infringements including breaches of byelaw regulations and national legislation relating to minimum landing sizes. Each offence is categorised to a fixed penalty which can be issued to the skipper and or owner of the respective vessel. The level of penalty issued must exceed the value of the respective catch.

Contact Officer

David McCandless

Chief Officer

Tel: 07771936501

Name(s)	Offence	Sanction	Court	Date	Fined	Costs Awarded	Costs Requested
Mr N Cammish (Skipper)	Landing 5 egg bearing lobsters - Bridlington	PROS	Scarborough	11 June 2024	£2,769	£900	£900
Mr R Cammish (Owner)	Landing 5 egg bearing lobsters - Bridlington	PROS	Scarborough	11 June 2024	£1,003		
Mr W Jenkinson	Landing 42 undersize edible crabs	FAP	N/A	02 August 2024	£500	N/A	N/A
Mr P Langley	Retaining 85 undersize edible crabs*, 3 egg bearing lobsters and 1 'V' notched lobster	PROS	Scarborough	16 August 2024	£1,792	£1,245	£1,245

* Found not guilty of retaining 85 undersize edible crabs

HOC – Home Office Caution

FAP – Financial Administrative Penalty

PROS – Formal Prosecution in Court

OCD – Conditional Discharge

Costs Requested – This is the amount that the solicitor requests the defendant to pay. This is equal to reasonable costs and does not usually include administrative time etc - so does not represent the full cost to NEIFCA. The solicitor asks for a reasonable amount to stand any chance of getting costs back.

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Authority Meeting
05 December 2024

Draft NEIFCA Annual Report 2023/2024

Report by the Chief Officer.

A. Purpose of Report

To provide members with a copy of the Annual Report covering the period, 2023/2024, summarising the Authority's outputs and activities during the year.

B. Recommendation

1. That members note the report.

1. Background

- 1.1 Section 178 of the 2009 Marine and Coastal Access Act places a statutory duty on Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA's) to prepare and publish an annual report on their activities.
- 1.2 The report covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and summarising the Authority's main outputs and achievements during its twelfth operational year is attached for member's information.
- 1.3 The report has been submitted to Defra to meet the annual agreed deadline of 30 November.

Contact Officer

David McCandless
Chief Officer
Tel: 07771936501

Background Papers

NEIFCA Annual Report 2023/2024

North Eastern
Inshore Fisheries
and Conservation
Authority

ANNUAL REPORT

2023/2024



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FOREWORD

This report provides a summary account and review of North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority's (NEIFCA) main outputs and achievements between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

Whilst the year presented some challenges for NEIFCA staff, there were also some notable, landmark achievements. Following almost a decade of preliminary work, on 6 October 2023, a contract was signed with Parkol Marine Ltd, a local ship builder, based in Whitby, North Yorkshire, to build and commission a new main offshore vessel to replace North Eastern Guardian III. This new vessel will be unique in its class and the next generation of a long line of vessels, dating back to 1905, designed and built to further the protection, enhancement and development of inshore fisheries along the North East coast of England.

Significant progress was also made in the development and progression of a new shellfish management byelaw which will enable NEIFCA to deliver a much more effective and proactive system management across commercial and recreational fisheries targeting crab, lobster and other shellfish species. Following a comprehensive period of formal consultation the byelaw was submitted to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for stage 1 Quality Assurance on 11 January 2024.

During the reporting year NEIFCA operational support staff played a key role in furthering the development of the Authority's fisheries permitting database to a point where the majority of permit applications and re-applications are processed electronically alongside the submission of monthly commercial catch and effort return. This work has significantly improved service delivery.

Finally, 2023/2024 also heralded some notable changes in terms of the internal leadership of NEIFCA. During December 2023 Caroline Lacey stepped down from her role as the Clerk and Darren Stevens, Director of Corporate Resources at East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC), was appointed as her successor. The Clerk provides independent governance and procedural oversight within NEIFCA. Throughout her time as Clerk, Caroline played a central role in progressing the build of the new main offshore vessel and also overseeing the implementation of the 2020 NEIFCA organisational review.

Professor Mike Elliott

Chair of North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA)



NATIONAL VISION

“ To lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry. ”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NEIFCA was formally established on 1 April 2011 under provision contained within the 2009 Marine and Coastal Access Act. It replaced North Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee (NESFC), assuming new duties and responsibilities for managing the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources within its district.

This Annual Report covers the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. It provides a comprehensive review of its main outputs and achievements across key work areas including: Organisational; Legislative Enforcement; Environmental and Scientific Research; Staff training and development; Communications; Partnership working and additional work supporting the delivery of national work streams. The report also provides a summary of NEIFCA's performance and progress against both longstanding national and local working objectives.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ACHIEVEMENTS

Main achievements and outputs during 2023/2024 included the following:

- 🐟 Agreement achieved with members on an uplifted, sound and stable operational budget of £1,377,464.
- 🐟 On 17 July 2023 NEIFCA utilised its emergency byelaw making powers under Section 157 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to ensure the effective and proactive management of an emergent beam trawl fishery targeting king scallops within its district.
- 🐟 On 17 July 2023 NEIFCA published its second appraisal of landing trends at key ports surrounding the Tees and North Yorkshire following the shellfish mortality events which occurred in the region during October 2021.
- 🐟 During October 2023 NEIFCA commenced a pilot trial supporting the electronic submission of fishing catch and effort returns as part of the ongoing development of the new fisheries permitting database. This work paralleled the implementation of a new electronic application process for recreational shellfish permits.
- 🐟 On 6 October 2023 a contract was signed with Parkol Marine Ltd, based in Whitby North Yorkshire, for the build and commission of a new main offshore fisheries vessel. The new vessel is expected to be delivered sometime during the spring of 2025.
- 🐟 On the 11 January 2024 the Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw and the new shellfish permit byelaw were submitted for first stage MMO Quality assurance representing the first step towards formal confirmation. The Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw will enhance protection for sensitive eelgrass beds occurring on the Humber Estuary and the shellfish management byelaw will enable more proactive and effective management of exploited shellfish stocks both offshore and onshore.
- 🐟 Active engagement and involvement in the national development and implementation of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPS) for key stocks including, King Scallops, Crabs and Lobster, sea bass and whelk through the associated working groups, consultation and publication on 14 December 2023.
- 🐟 Successful completion of the final years survey work relating to the European Lobster Settlement Index (ELSI) project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

Partnership Working

NEIFCA retains a strong commitment to active partnership working and continues to build on that through active collaboration with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Seafish Industry Authority and the Centre for the Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS). During 2023/2024 much of that work involved supporting the national development and implementation of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPS) a new statutory requirement of the 2020 Fisheries Act. With additional grant aid support, provided by Defra, NEIFCA was able to enhance resourcing within its Environmental and Scientific team and strengthen its active involvement in the development of six 'front runner' FMP's including King Scallops, Crab and Lobster, sea bass, whelk and Southern North Sea and English Channel mixed flatfish. This work included attending national and local workshops, imputing directly into the development of the draft plans and responding to the formal consultation through to publication on 14 December 2023. Going forward from 2023/2024, NEIFCA's involvement in both the implementation of established FMPS and the development of new plans for other species will become an established component of its annual work programme.

- From an enforcement and compliance perspective NEIFCA maintained an active and collaborative working relationship with MMO colleagues which included attendance and participation in monthly joint Tasking and Coordination Group (TCG) meetings. These meetings enable the review of shared intelligence and the associated tasking of joint actions to tackle issues as they emerge and develop locally. During 2024 this work was further enhanced through the commissioning of a bespoke joint intelligence database known as 'CLUE'. As a result of this collaborative approach several joint enforcement operations were undertaken to target illegal activities. During 2023/2024 NEIFCA officers issued 24 verbal warnings and 4 written warnings for a range of offences and a further 7 cases were formally prosecuted in local Magistrates Courts for non-compliance with local byelaw and national fisheries legislation.
- During 2023/2024 further joint working was undertaken in conjunction with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), the Borders Agency and local policing and public protection teams in response to the illegal gathering of certain intertidal shellfish species within the Authority's district. Officers also worked actively with the Environment Agency (EA), policing intertidal netting activity along the coast.

North Eastern Guardian III

Whitby Harbour 2019



INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This 2023/2024 Annual Report provides a summary of NEIFCA's main outputs and achievements across Central policy, encompassing strategic development and legislative review; Legislative enforcement; Environmental and scientific research, encompassing fisheries stock assessment, marine survey and monitoring, data management, review of marine consents and licensing applications and marine habitat protection; Staff training and development; Communications and partnership working. The report complements NEIFCA's 2023/2024 Annual Plan and also provides a summary of progress against longstanding national IFCA success criteria and high-level objectives.

Background

NEIFCA was established in October 2010 under provisions contained within the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. On 1 April 2011, it assumed full statutory responsibility for managing the exploitation of sea fisheries resources within its jurisdiction. Since its inception it has drawn professional service provision including legal, financial and human resource support from its lead Local Authority member, East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC). NEIFCA membership totals 30 and comprises of 13 elected councillors, representing 11 coastal local authorities together with 14 members appointed by the Marine Management Organisation and singular members representing Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation.

Financial Overview

NEIFCA's total annual budget for the reporting period 2023/2024 was agreed by members during March at £1,377,464. The budget was allocated across four main areas:

Corporate

Expenditure relating to corporate governance.

Headquarter

The cost of management and administrative support.

Operations

Direct expenditure incurred in the performance of the authority's objectives comprising of offshore, land-based and environmental activities.

Grant aided projects

Projects which are specific or time bound and wholly funded by external sources.

See table on Page 10

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

Income versus expenditure is summarised in the following tables covering the 2023/2024 financial year. The final budget outturn shows an underspend of £283,944. This outturn position is made up of a number of compensating variances including: Staffing vacancies, some of which were planned, and additional income which had not be factored into original budget projections including, external grant aid payments and more favourable banking interest rates. Due to extensive periods of vessel layups through 2023/2024 the offshore fuel budget was also under utilised. The savings generated through 2023/2024 were transferred to support the financing of the new vessel build.

2022/2023		2023/2024				
Net Expenditure		Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	Original Budget	Variance
£402,975	Central / Headquarters	£450,594	£56,625	£393,969	£429,330	£-35,361
£127,796	Land Based Operations	£142,433	£5,467	£136,965	£135,590	£1,375
£670,812	Offshore Operations	£505,627	£26,989	£478,638	£559,510	£-80,872
£101,725	Environment	£129,122	£18,050	£111,072	£140,130	£-29,058
£-31,013	Grand Aided Projects	£112,876	£194,404	£-81,528	£70,000	£-151,528
£1,272,295		£1,340,652	£301,535	£1,039,117	£1,334,560	£-295,442

Income	Sources of Finance	Expenditure	Income	Net Income	Original Budget	Variance
£1,337,344	Annual levy on Local Authorities	£0	£1,377,465	£1,377,465	£1,377,460	£-5
£0	Contribution from Reserves	£0	£58,497	£58,497	£70,000	£11,503
£0	Contribution to / from Capital - Vehicles	£0				
£-112,900	Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	£112,900		£112,900	£112,900	
£1,224,444		£112,900	£1,435,962	£1,323,062	£1,334,360	£11,498

NORTH EASTERN GUARDIAN III

Fisheries Patrol



ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW 2023/2024

Main Achievements

- During December 2022 members endorsed and set an operational budget of £1,377,464 for the 2023/2024 year, providing a stable and uplifted funding base
- On 17 July 2023 NEIFCA utilised its emergency byelaw making powers under Section 157 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to ensure the effective and proactive management of an unforeseen, emergent beam trawl fishery, targeting king scallops within its district which couldn't be managed under existing fisheries byelaw provisions.
- On 17 July 2023 NEIFCA published its second appraisal of landing trends at key ports surrounding the Tees and North Yorkshire following the shellfish mortality events which occurred in the region during October 2021. This report included a more detailed assessment of available catch and landing data, covering a longer time frame, and highlighted significant reductions of crab and lobster catches, particularly at Redcar and Hartlepool surrounding the Tees Estuary.
- During October 2023 NEIFCA commenced a pilot trial supporting the electronic submission of fishing catch and effort returns as part of the ongoing development of the new fisheries permitting database. This work paralleled the implementation of a new electronic application process for recreational shellfish permits.
- On 6 October 2023 a contract was signed with Parkol Marine Ltd, based in Whitby North Yorkshire, for the build and commission of a new main offshore fisheries vessel. By the end of the reporting period on 31 March 2024 much of the after-hull structure had been completed. The new vessel is expected to be delivered sometime during the spring of 2025 and remains on time and on budget.
- On the 11 January 2024 the Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw and the new shellfish permit byelaw were submitted for first stage MMO Quality assurance representing the first step towards formal confirmation. The Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw will enhance protection for sensitive eelgrass beds occurring on the Humber Estuary and the shellfish management byelaw will enable more proactive and effective management of exploited shellfish stocks both offshore and onshore.
- Throughout the reporting period NEIFCA staff have been actively engaged and involved in the national development and implementation of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) for key stocks including, King Scallops, Crabs and Lobster, sea bass and whelk through attendance on associated working groups and submitting responses to formal consultative processes which culminated in the publication of 6 'front-runner' FMPs on 14 December 2023. Engagement in this workstream has been supported by additional grant aid provided by Defra and included the appointment of an additional officer on a one year fixed term contract.
- With support from external partners, including Hull marine laboratory based in the University of Hull and some local fishing vessel operators the final planned year of the European Lobster Settlement Index (ELSI) project was successfully completed and a final report on the project will be released sometime during the Spring of 2025.

CENTRAL POLICY 2023/2024

Central Policy and Strategic Development

Central policy and strategic development is supported by two key internal sub-groups, the Executive Committee and the Science Advisory Group. The Science Advisory Group comprises of MMO appointees and representatives from Natural England, the Environment Agency and the MMO and is responsible for overseeing regulatory review, development and implementation, scientific and survey work, projects and licensing applications and consents. The Executive Committee comprises of elected and appointed MMO members and provides a smaller more focused decision making group to undertake any work delegated by the full authority, including ratifying emergency byelaw provisions and considering appeals against process. These groups work in tandem with recommendations passing through the Executive Committee for final endorsement by the full authority.

Risk Management

The effective management of risk remains a key priority for officers and members of the authority. A formal strategy supporting the identification and management of risk was first agreed and adopted by members of the shadow authority on 25 January 2011. The strategy and its provisions are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains 'fit-for-purpose'.

Alongside the strategy, the identification and management of risk is supported through a number of risk registers covering both strategic and operational risk, including a risk-based enforcement matrix. All risk registers are subject to six-monthly review with updates reported to authority members and posted on the authority's website. During the reporting year, these reviews and updates were completed during March and September 2023.

Emergency IFCA Byelaws

Section 157 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 provides a mechanism for IFCA's to introduce emergency byelaw regulations to deal with unforeseen issues requiring urgent action. Emergency byelaws are time limited to a maximum period of eighteen months. Since its inception in 2011, NEIFCA has effectively utilised its emergency byelaw making powers on six separate occasions, including this current, 2023/2024, reporting year. On 17 July 2023 NEIFCA confirmed an emergency byelaw to enable the effective management of an unforeseen emergent beam trawl fishery targeting King Scallop within its district. This has enabled NEIFCA to control the numbers of vessels accessing the fishery, set fishing conditions and in combination with existing byelaw regulations, gather for information on the fishery to inform future management. This emergency byelaw is scheduled to expire on 17 January 2025.

LEGISLATIVE ENFORCEMENT

Legislative enforcement forms a key element of the authority's drive to achieve the sustainable management of sea fisheries resources within its district. Enforcement is undertaken by fourteen warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) who are responsible for monitoring and inspecting fisheries activities, both offshore and along the coast. Enforcement work is supported by a dedicated 26 metre patrol vessel, North Eastern Guardian III (NEG III), which carries a 6.4 metre rigid inflatable boat (RIB) that is utilised to board and inspect fishing vessels at sea and a 9.5 metre cabin RIB to support its offshore operations. NEG III will be replaced during the 2025/2026 reporting year with a new 'state of the art' 25 metre catamaran with significantly enhanced enforcement and offshore survey capabilities.

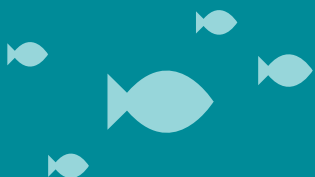
During the 2023/2024 reporting period offshore enforcement and compliance work was impacted by unforeseen mechanical issues onboard both NEG III and Protector III, NEIFCA's 9.5m cabin RIB. These issues were rectified by the end of the reporting year but critical and often complex repair work left both vessels out of service for extended periods.

New Vessel Build

On 6 October 2023 a contract was signed with Parkol Marine Ltd, based in Whitby North Yorkshire, for the build and commission of a new main offshore fisheries vessel to replace NEG III. The new vessel, a 25m aluminium catamaran, has been designed to meet NEIFCA's developing operational needs and will significantly enhance its offshore capabilities particularly in relation to the assessment of marine habitats, fish stocks and the effective delivery of its enforcement and compliance work. By the end of the reporting period, on 31 March 2024, much of the after-hull structure had been completed and the project remains on schedule for delivery sometime during spring 2025. The new vessel build is funded through a combination of planned savings, capital raised through the sale of NEIII and funding accessed through the Defra IFCA Capital Delivery programme.

ENFORCEMENT OUTPUTS 2021/2022

Enforcement Output	Frequency
Vessel Inspections	143
Vessel observations	705
Inspection Reports completed	549
Verbal Warnings	24
Written Warnings	2
Offences Reported	16
Formal Cautions	2
Financial Administrative Penalties	0
Formal prosecutions	7



ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Marine environmental and scientific research functions continue to develop and expand in line with the developing role and remit of the authority. The environmental and science team undertake fisheries stock assessment work, collate and analyse seabed habitat and water column data, review marine licensing applications and consents, support marine habitat conservation and management through engagement with European Marine Site (EMS) management schemes and Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) programmes and oversee the internal management of data. This work is guided by an annual research and evidence plan and a five-year strategic plan.

Fisheries Stock Assessment work

The majority of species exploited within the NEIFCA district are a component of wider stock units which extend beyond the six-mile limit and also into neighbouring IFCA districts. During 2011/2012 officers developed some multiple fishery indicator frameworks, a combination of specific reference points and proxies for measuring progress towards achieving sustainable fish stocks. Alongside and at the request of NEIFCA members, officers have incorporated a broader overview, detailing information on gear types, additional species alongside economic and socio-economic factors. This analytical work continues to develop and evolve and is underpinned by a comprehensive stock assessment programme which includes quayside sampling at four main ports including Hartlepool, Whitby, Scarborough and Bridlington and an offshore monitoring programme covering each of the five main ICES areas located within and surrounding the authority's district.

Marine Licensing and Consents

During the reporting period, authority officers reviewed 18 licensing and consent applications covering a wide range of projects from maintenance and capital dredging to discharging at sea and large infrastructure applications, including developments within major ports in the Tees and Humber estuaries, offshore renewables, pipelines and cabling.

Shellfish Mortality - Tees & North Yorkshire

Since the shellfish mortality event in October 2021, NEIFCA Officers have been supporting the key agencies (DEFRA, EA, CEFAS & MMO) with sampling and logistics, dissemination of any further wash-up events and reports, liaising between agencies and engaging industry through working groups. Monitoring trends in MMO and NEIFCA landings data also continued and a second landings monitoring report was published in July 2023. A wash-up log was initiated at the start of the shellfish mortality event in October 2021 capturing records of any wash up events and associated reports from the industry, public and social media. This log was also used to support the assessment of the shellfish mortality event by an Independent, expert panel appointed by government in December 2022. The panel reviewed all available evidence and published its findings in January 2023 concluding that it was highly unlikely that capital dredging works surrounding the Tees estuary could have caused the mass mortality. Officers continue to monitor the relevant sites for any potential wash up events and are prepared to respond quickly and liaise efficiently with key agencies if such an event ever re-occurs. NEIFCA's annual stock monitoring programme will also pick up trends in fisheries within the affected areas in the medium to longer term. At present those trends are improving as recovery continues.

Education and Outreach

Scarborough 2019



MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

European Marine Sites (EMS)

The NEIFCA district contains five European Marine Sites (EMSs); Northumbria Coast, Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast, Flamborough Head, Humber Estuary and the Greater Wash. Flamborough Head and the Humber Estuary are each supported by a management group comprising statutory authorities and other relevant bodies and NEIFCA plays an active role in each. NEIFCA workstreams within the EMSs focus on four main areas; active participation in the EMS management schemes and associated projects; the provision of guidance to developers and input into the licensing conditions of development consent orders within and adjacent to EMSs; stock assessments of commercially important finfish and crustacea; and the appropriate assessment and management of fisheries within EMS boundaries through both voluntary and regulatory measures. Significant progress was made during 2019/2020 in reducing risk to designated Marine Protected Area (MPA) features associated with fishing activity. A seasonal netting prohibition in the waters surrounding Flamborough Head and Filey Brigg came into force to protect the largest mainland UK breeding seabird colony; home to 412,000 seabirds. In addition, a trawling permit management system was introduced for the Humber Estuary. Control of trawl effort will help to protect the valuable habitats and species within the estuary, which also acts as vital spawning and nursery grounds for a range of fish species. Regulations to improve fishery data collection have also been approved. Such regulations remain under continuous review to ensure that they maintain appropriate levels of feature protection across all the MPAs located within the NEIFCA district. During the reporting period two new byelaw regulations were submitted to the MMO for stage 1 quality assurance.

The provisions contained within those regulations included an extension to an MPA within the Humber Estuary to improve protections for seagrass habitat and a new management framework to restrict the number of pots worked by each vessel operating within the NEIFCA district.

Marine Conservation

The NEIFCA district contains two MCZ sites; Runswick Bay and Holderness Inshore. Full assessments have been completed on both sites and appropriate management measures supporting their protection are already in place. Work to establish a new Management Group to encompass both MCZs is supported through the Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership.

Data Management

All raw data gathered from the NEIFCA district is stored electronically in a format enabling ease of manipulation, import into other programmes and statistical analysis. Spatial data is stored in shape file format for presentation and analysis in the GIS platforms. This is a developing workstream that aims to generate key data layers that present information related to the NEIFCA district, such as management regimes, fishing effort, habitat types and commercial species ranges.

EXTERNALLY FUNDED PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

European Lobster Larval Settlement Index Project

Funded through the Defra UK Seafood Scheme this is a two-year partnership project with the Holderness Fishing Industry Group which started in February 2022. The project aims to better understand the distribution and abundance of lobster larvae and newly settled post-larval lobster (Early Benthic Phase Lobster) within the NEIFCA district. This information will be key for the development of a more predictive stock assessment in the future. For this project, 40 settlement cages were deployed across the district between May and September in 2022 and 2023. At the end of each survey season all cages were recovered and the first Early Benthic Phase (EBP) lobster was found in one of the cages off Flamborough Head. This is the first time an EBP lobster has been captured in the UK using this method. Additional valuable data was collected on the biodiversity of the benthos and seasonal abundance and stages of planktonic lobster larvae. More data will be collected throughout the 2024 season. A final project report will be published sometime during the 2024/2025 reporting year.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A new staffing appraisal system was implemented during November 2021 and has been further developed through 2023/2024. This new system is linked to pay progression and performance and has strengthened the identification of individual training and development needs across all the operational teams. Alongside it, progress against staff training and development needs are now monitored centrally and reviewed on a six-monthly basis. Further ongoing work is also supporting leadership and management development across the Authority's senior management team.



COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

NEIFCA Website

The authority's website and social media, such as Facebook, remains at the forefront of its drive to improve overall communications, accessibility to information and associated services. A new Authority website 'went live' during March 2022. It carries a much clearer, simpler format which is more straightforward to navigate. Authority staff can now edit and update the content directly which means that information can be updated on a much more regular basis. Stakeholders can access a range of services from the website including applications for fishing permits and provision of feedback on a wide range of topical issues.

Tyne to Tees, Shores and Seas - SeaScapes Partnership

The SeaScapes project is a partnership of local, regional and national organisations working in the coastal, marine and heritage sectors that have come together to better protect and celebrate the unique coastline between the rivers Tyne and Tees. The first National Lottery Heritage Fund supported Marine Landscape Partnership will deliver around 23 projects over the next four years worth £5 million to the communities of South Tyneside, Sunderland, Durham and Hartlepool.

Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership

Delivery of a well managed network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is a key work area for NEIFCA. With the growing number of MPAs, effective site management requires new ways of working and a collaborative approach. As a member of the Flamborough Head European Marine Site Management Group, National Lottery Heritage Funding was obtained to establish the Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership. The emerging partnership is focussed on supporting, understanding, managing and caring for Yorkshire's seas, coastline and hinterland, working with cross-sector partners to achieve shared aims and promote holistic action in the marine and coastal environment.

Feedback System

During March 2022 NEIFCA agreed a new service level agreement with East Riding of Yorkshire Council for the provision of enhanced support covering both feedback and information governance. This support was utilised during 2023/2024 to assess and respond to a number of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and one formal complaint.

Partnership Working

NEIFCA works extensively, collaboratively and proactively with a wide range of partner agencies and organisations, most notably, the MMO, Environment Agency (EA), Defra, the Seafish Industry Authority and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. During 2023/2024 much of that associated work involved supporting the national development and implementation of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPS) a new statutory requirement of the 2020 Fisheries Act. With additional grant aid support, provided by Defra, NEIFCA was able to enhance resourcing within its Environmental and Scientific team and strengthen its active involvement in the development of six 'front runner' FMP's including King Scallops, Crab and Lobster, sea bass, whelk and Southern North Sea and English Channel mixed flatfish. This included attending national and local workshops, imputing directly into the development of the draft plans and responding to the associated formal consultation through to publication on 14 December 2023. Going forward from 2023/2024, NEIFCA's involvement in both the implementation of established FMPS and the development of new plans for other species will become an established component of its annual work programme, delivered through active, collaborative partnership working with key agencies, organisations and both commercial and recreational stakeholders.

Further collaborative partnership working was fostered at national level through the IFCA Chief Officers Group (COG) and the Defra Marine and Fisheries Chief Officers Group (MAFCO).

From an enforcement and compliance perspective NEIFCA maintained an active and collaborative working relationship with MMO colleagues which included attendance and participation in monthly joint Tasking and Coordination Group (TCG) meetings, the national joint Strategic Operational Group (SOG) and the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG). The monthly TCG meetings enable the review of shared intelligence and the associated tasking of joint actions to tackle issues as they emerge and develop locally. During 2024 this work was further enhanced through the commissioning of a bespoke joint intelligence database known as 'CLUE'. Since the commissioning of the 'CLUE' system NEIFCA has uploaded over 60 individual fisheries intelligence records covering a wide range of issues. As a result of this collaborative approach several joint enforcement operations were undertaken to target illegal fisheries activities during 2023/2024.

Throughout the reporting period extensive joint working was undertaken by NEIFCA's shore operations team in conjunction with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), the Borders Agency and local policing and public protection teams in response to the illegal gathering of certain intertidal shellfish species throughout the Authority's district. Officers also worked actively with the Environment Agency (EA), policing intertidal netting activity along the coast.

National IFCA Association

A national association was established on 24 March 2011 to represent and support the work of IFCAs. NEIFCA continues to play an active role in this association through the Chairman and Chief Officer. Throughout 2023/2024 the national Association of IFCAs (AIFCA) played a strong supporting role across the ten IFCAS delivering cohesion and collaboration which included supporting IFCA engagement across a number of national projects including the Coastal Health and Livelihoods project (CHLE), a CEFAS led project which is focused on improving the planning, programming and response to unforeseen events impacting on the health of the marine environment and associated livelihoods such as the Tees and North Yorkshire shellfish mortality event.





North Eastern IFCA staff and BBC presenter Tom Heap courtesy of BBC Countryfile following a film shoot on 18 June 2021 which aired on 4 July 2021.

NATIONAL IFCA SUCCESS CRITERIA

IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders; IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime;

IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts;

IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional;

IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives;

NEIFCA work streams and organisational priorities are geared towards the positive achievement of the national vision: outlined on page 4.

To support the positive delivery of the above national vision, IFCAs have agreed a set of national success criteria matched with corresponding working-level objectives. The vision, success criteria and national working objectives are designed to assist in the creation of a shared understanding of the aims and objectives of IFCAs nationally and focus positive service delivery towards achievement of the national vision. These national IFCA performance criteria also link directly to the UK Marine Policy Statement.

Focus and Priorities for the Year - Annual Plan 2023/2024

Each year authority members agree and set their objectives and priorities for the year ahead which are outlined within the summary work programme contained within the authority's 2023/2024 annual plan. The 2023/2024 plan was adopted by members on 14 March 2023.

NATIONAL IFCA WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVES

The following tables provide a summary of the authority’s progress towards achieving the Success Criteria and supporting Working Level Objectives (WLO) during the 2023/2024 reporting period.

31 March 2024



Completed



Ongoing



Not started

WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will maintain and implement an effective communication strategy.

OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts that will have been reviewed and updated by 31 March each year.

The IFCA will have completed a review of its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2023/2024

Through its fishing permitting schemes NEIFCA maintains an annual database of some 3,000 individual contacts covering both commercial and recreational fishing.

The authority maintains a formal communication strategy which is reviewed annually.

Copies of annual plans are sent to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Secretary of State by 30 April each year.

The IFCA will maintain its website ensuring public access to current fisheries and conservation information for the district, including management requirements and byelaws. non-reserved IFCA Committee papers will be published.

The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month.

A new authority website 'went live' during at the beginning of April 2022 and information is updated on a daily basis which includes information on live projects or events occurring within the NEIFCA district.

Copies of annual reports are sent to Defra's Secretary of State by 30 November in the year in which they are published.

WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will contribute to co-ordinated activity at a national level.

OUTCOME(S)

By 31 March each year the IFCA will have participated appropriately, proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified within the annual plan.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2023/2024

Throughout the reporting year authority officers have engaged extensively in a wide range of nationally coordinated work streams including joint training and joint intelligence gathering through the National Association of IFCAs, the National IFCA Chief Officers Group, the National IFCA Technical Advisory Group and the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group. In addition, throughout 2023/2024 NEIFCA played a full and active role in newly established Regional Fisheries Groups and maintained active engagement and participation in the national fisheries intelligence gathering programme. During 2024 the MMO, in partnership with IFCA's, commissioned 'Clue' a new joint fisheries intelligence database system. Since commissioning, NEIFCA has inputted over 60 intelligence reports onto the system.

The IFCA and its principle partners will have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Services (CEFAS) will be maintained.

The IFCA will have reviewed all of its MoUs by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed standard.

National MoU's are maintained through the Association of IFCA's but more recently have largely been superseded by joint operational delivery groups such as the IFCA/MMO Strategic Operational Group, NIMEG and TAG.

WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will publish its enforcement risk register and strategy, clearly setting out its approach to achieving regulatory compliance and potential sanctions that may be applied for infringements and/or offences.

OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will ensure its enforcement risk register and strategy are published and available on its website from 1 April each year.

The IFCA will compile records of enforcement activity in a standard format; provide them to AIFCA for collation and publish them on its website.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2023/2024

The authority publishes a comprehensive annual risk register which covers all aspects of risk including enforcement. The authority publishes details of its enforcement activity within its annual report and provides statistics to the National Association of IFCAs in a standard format.

The IFCA will manage operational activity and capture, record, evaluate and disseminate intelligence that is compatible with partner organisations. It is engaged in joint working with partner organisations.

Working to the National Intelligence Model (NIM) and participating actively through Tasking and Coordination Groups (TCGs).

Throughout 2023/2024 Officers have been actively engaged in the joint fisheries intelligence gathering programme, collating, assessing and exchanging intelligence in accordance with NIM principles.

This work culminated in the commissioning of the 'Clue' system during 2023/2024. A new bespoke fisheries intelligence database managed by the MMO to enhance joint intelligence gathering with IFCAs.

This involved active participation in the TCG process including joint TCGs with MMO officers.

WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

Warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) will be trained and accredited to nationally agreed standards. They will maintain professionalism and make appropriate interventions to deliver efficient, effective enforcement activity.

OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will adopt the national code of conduct for IFCOs which will be reviewed annually and published on its website.

Warranted Officers attain accreditation. ALL undertaking continuing professional development.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2023/204

Authority Officers undergo a wide range of training supported by a twelve month probationary process. That training incorporates an induction, an IFCA residential course and 'on-the-job' training and evaluation.

A national code of conduct for IFCA enforcement officers was agreed in 2010 and was adopted by the authority. It is reviewed annually.



WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will identify issues likely to affect sustainable management of the marine environment in the IFC District; undertake risk assessment and gap analysis; review appropriateness of existing measures; evaluate management options and develop and implement proportionate marine management solutions.

OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas and report progress to the authority.

The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website management information (e.g. sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate the extent of effectiveness of the intervention.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2023/2024

Authority officers have completed extensive site feature/activity interaction risk matrices for all Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), including European Marine Sites (EMSs) and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) occurring within the NEIFCA district. A significant supporting management programme commenced during 2013 prioritised towards high risk activities. This work was advanced during 2019/2020 with the confirmation of two regulations protecting features at Flamborough Head, Filey and the Humber Estuary. On the 1 December 2022 the Authority approved the extension of the protected Eelgrass area at Spurn Point in the Humber Estuary Byelaw The IFCA actively supports implementation of a well managed network of marine protected areas by: developing a range of criteria based management options; implementing management measures to ensure that inshore fisheries activities comply with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the revised approach to managing commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites; and that local management contributes to delivery of targets for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive and Marine Plans.

WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will develop Fisheries Management Plans for priority species where appropriate. Shared objectives will be developed with identified partners; actions identified and best practice reflected so that management makes a contribution to sustainable development.

Proportionate regulation (for example introducing a legal mechanism such as a byelaw) is used as a last resort; The effectiveness of interventions to improve the delivery of beneficial outcomes is continuously monitored; and

There is a clear IFCA Committee process for dealing with agreed interventions quickly, efficiently and effectively, particularly for emergency byelaws.

OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from Fisheries Management Plans in its own annual plan, which will be published by 31 March each year.

Progress made in relevant Fisheries Management Plan areas, including maximum sustainable yield commitments, will be noted in the IFCA's annual report.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2023/2024

The sustainable management of key lobster and edible crab stocks was further enhanced during 2019/2020 through measures introduced in the revised Crustacea Conservation byelaw. Protection for soft shelled and berried lobsters will help to bolster spawning stock of this species, while the introduction of a maximum pot size and reducing the maximum size of vessel permitted to fish within inshore areas are important effort controls that will help to ensure the continued viability of the regionally significant fishery. A new minimum size byelaw, developed in collaboration with a number of other IFCAs, was also introduced, confirmed during February 2021. As was a catch return byelaw aimed at improving data capture to inform future management decisions.

A new Fisheries Management Plan has been adopted to support the inshore scallop dredging fishery. The plan has been informed by a four year pilot trial which commenced following the introduction of emergency control measures at the beginning of 2015. The plan describes the state of the stocks and the fishery derived from research undertaken by the authority, it outlines current national and local management policy and objectives, and highlights the conservation and fishery management measures in place to ensure a sustainable fishery. The plan will guide development of the dredge fishery, balancing the needs of different stakeholders.

At national level, during 2023/2024, NEIFCA is also fully engaged in the implementation of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) across key exploited stocks including King Scallop, crab and lobster, sea bass and whelk.

WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will demonstrate its long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management by having appropriate plan-making, review, update and amendment procedures in place. The IFCA will record its performance against corporate outcomes and indicators as soon as practically possible following the end of the financial year.

Staff performance management systems will be in place that link to the IFCA success criteria. There will be an induction procedure for new joiners. Staff training and development needs will be identified. Performance will be managed and where necessary, improvement procedures will be followed.

OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will publish a plan on its website by 31 March, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.

After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish a report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year by 30 November. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.

IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 May each year.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2023/2024

The authority has produced an annual plan and annual report since 2010. The 2023/2024 plan was considered and endorsed by the committee on 14 March 2023 and submitted to the Secretary of State. The annual report covering the 2023/2024 period was submitted to the Secretary of State during November 2024.

A new staffing appraisal system commenced during November 2022 which incorporated performance related pay progression. This system enables a bespoke annual training plan to be set to meet individual staff needs underpinned by personal set of work objectives for the year ahead. All staffing appraisals were completed by 1 April 2024.

Staff performance management systems will be in place that link to the IFCA success criteria. There will be an induction procedure for new joiners. Staff training and development needs will be identified. Performance will be managed and where necessary, improvement procedures will be followed.

IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 May each year.

During 2023/2024 the authority maintained a system of 'hybrid' meetings providing for attendance in person combined with virtual engagement to conduct its business. Agendas, supporting papers and minutes were published in accordance with the authority's standing orders and posted on the authority's website.

WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

Standard operating procedures describe how data is captured and shared with principal partners.

OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA's contribution to Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and progress that it has made towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's annual report.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2023/2024

The authority's environmental and scientific leads are fully engaged with other IFCA colleagues through the national IFCA Technical Advisory Group. Through this group, the authority's officers have developed and implemented standard operating practices across most of its work streams.



Non-confidential meta-data collected through the IFCA research programme should be recorded in a database available to the marine research community.

Non-confidential data is shared reducing the need for duplication of survey effort.

Authority officers share non-confidential meta data through MEDIN and 'one drive' and improving internal data sharing within the authority's membership remains an ongoing work stream.



North Eastern



North Eastern Inshore Fisheries
and Conservation Authority

2023/2024
Annual Report